THE RATIONALE OF MESMERISM

BY

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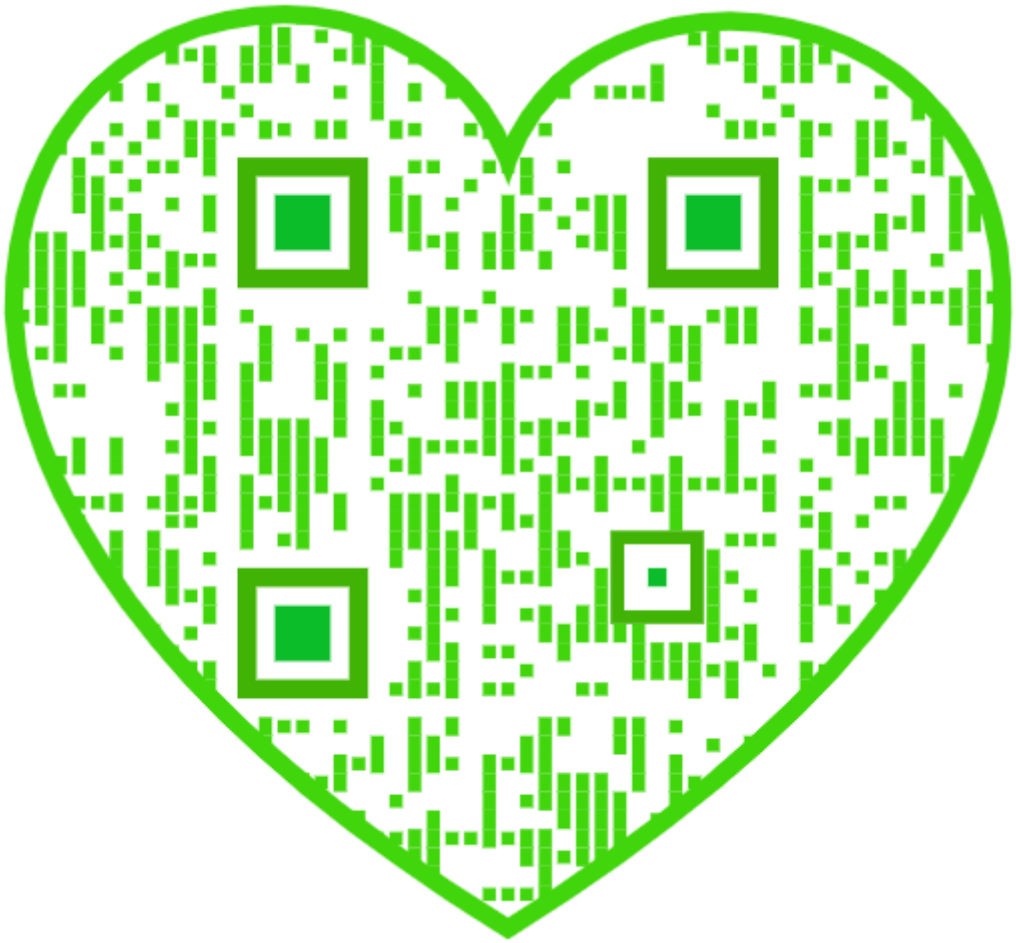

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CHAPTER I.

OLD AND NEW THEORIES.

It is necessary at the outset that I should explain why I am writing about mesmerism and not about hypnotism. Names are, after all, but tickets put by conventional agreement upon things or branches of knowledge, and if, in the first instance, a hundred years ago, when the matter began to attract notice in Europe, the word "hypnotism" had been adopted to describe certain abnormal conditions of the human body and the human faculties, we need not, at this stage of the proceedings, have quarreled with the expression. But, though it has become so strangely popular quite recently, the term "hypnotism" merely represents, as regards its actual origin, a misconception of the facts

relating to the abnormal conditions just mentioned, coupled with a very unworthy disposition to slander the first important exponent of all this knowledge in modern times and to cover a cowardly retreat from denials which had become no longer tenable.

In so far as the term "hypnotism" is consciously preferred by some modern investigators, that preference rests on the idea that the earlier belief in the days when nothing of the kind was spoken of except "mesmerism," has been shown by later experience to be scientifically erroneous. The early belief was that something in the nature of a subtle fluid passed from the mesmeric operator to the subject; whereas some experimentalists of the modern school have ascertained that results alleged to have been obtained by mesmerism can be brought about where no operator takes part in the undertaking. Some people by simply working for themselves apparatus of a suitable sort, by gazing, for example, at the rapid flashes of a revolving mirror, or by merely concentrating their attention on a spot of bright light, will be enabled to bring on a certain abnormal, or shall we say cataleptic, condition of their nerves, which will in its turn superinduce

anæsthesia, perhaps, or even some imperfect psychic phenomena. But the discovery of these people does not in the smallest degree disprove the other discovery of the earlier mesmerists that a subtle fluid really does pass when an operator, properly qualified himself, is at work, and the fact that this is so is proved by many more experimentalists than have endeavored to maintain the bare hypnotic hypothesis. Further than this, many mesmerists of the higher order entertain no doubt concerning the existence of this fluid, for the simple reason that they can see it.

Sight is a faculty which varies in its penetrative power in a greater degree even than telescopes vary. A tolerably simple experiment to test this may be devised on the following plan: If a spectrum from a ray of sunlight be thrown upon a screen, every one who is acquainted with the most elementary facts of optics will be aware that beyond the colored band of light which is visible, there are invisible rays, the presence of which can be proved by means of photographic paper, and the chemical power of which, indeed, is considerably greater than that of the bright rays actually seen. It is perhaps not so

generally known, however, that the power of direct vision extends with some people much further in the direction of those so-called ultra-violet rays than is the case with others. The majority of people, it is true, will come to a tolerably close agreement as to the distance along the colored band of light on the screen which they can see, and if asked to mark the place at which the violet tinge absolutely ceases will mark places that are not very widely apart, but here and there a small percentage of more peculiarly endowed observers will be found to see greatly beyond the usual stopping-place.

Just in the same way other visible phenomena of nature besides rays of violet light melt, so to speak, in others which are not ordinarily visible, and the subtle fluid which emanates from a mesmeric operator is very close to the border-land of the phenomena which every one can see, and therefore can be discerned by, I should think, many more people than will be able to see to any considerable distance into the ultra-violet spectrum. A well-known writer, Baron von Reichenbach, devoted himself especially to this branch of mesmeric inquiry. He has recorded with patient care, for which a pig-

headed generation inhabiting the earth about the middle of this century gave him no gratitude, a long series of results obtained with a great many "sensitives" whom he employed, all having to do with their power of seeing visible emanations from human fingers, as also from physical magnetic apparatus.

Baron von Reichenbach's experiments, properly followed up, would have been found to constitute a complete demonstration of the theory of mesmerism, advanced by Mesmer himself in the first instance, and unreservedly adopted as entirely in harmony with their own extensive observation and practice by his immediate followers, de Puységur and Deleuze. But before the Baron's time the whole subject had been discredited by reason of the fierce incredulity it encountered at the hands of the orthodox scientific world at the beginning of the century. In the long history of human blundering there can hardly be any example more remarkable than that afforded by the rejection of mesmerism at this period. The facts illustrating the reality of mesmerism issued in torrents from every centre of mesmeric activity, but the passive opposition of bigotry

was not to be overcome. Hundreds of people practiced mesmerism, employing it solely as a curative agent; its highest psychic aspects being at that time little understood even by its warmest partisans, and thousands of people benefited by its application. But all the recognized societies and corporations of science were arrayed in arms against it, and professional persecution was the lot of any medical man who identified himself with the new discovery. This persecution in the end stamped it out almost entirely. Some further details on this point will fall most naturally into their place when I come to speak of the early literature of mesmerism, but for the moment I pass on to trace the genesis of the modern view of the subject in connection with which we have to congratulate ourselves on the broad fact, that one of the most important avenues of knowledge open to students of the natural history of humanity is now again available for general use, but in connection with which, except for that broad fact, we have, as a generation, little to be proud of.

Modern writers on hypnotism are almost all building their conclusions on a negation of truth concerning the forces really at work

in the production of mesmeric phenomena, and are committed for the most part to a theory which concentrates their attention almost entirely on what is rather a disease of the science they deal with, than the science itself. Nor do I think it a satisfactory plan for people, who know something more of the science in its loftier aspect, to "divide the records of the mind," and say "hypnotism is one thing and mesmerism is another." Of course the experiments practiced at the Salpêtrière are one thing and the healthy applications of animal magnetism are another; hypnotic suggestion is one thing, and the culture of the higher faculties under true mesmerism is another. But people who adopt the expression "hypnotism" mean thereby, or think they mean, to include in its range all that is real and genuine in the discoveries of Mesmer, all that was not imposture and charlatanry in the practice of his immediate successors. Psychic students, therefore, who really understand something of the forces set in action, whether intelligently by the mesmerist or unintelligently by the hypnotist, cannot handle the term as having a departmental significance. It is, as a term employed in connection with this

subject, the flag of error, so to speak. We ought not to make peace with it at all.

The general use of the term dates back to Mr. Braid of Manchester, a surgeon who is called by MM. Binet and Féré "the initiator of the scientific study of animal magnetism."

He was really a person who invented a method of thinking which enabled people, thus inclined, to handle and talk about some of the phenomena of mesmerism, without setting themselves in opposition to medical orthodoxy, and without giving up the ungrateful cry that Mesmer was an impostor. For half a century the medical profession had committed itself to the denial of patent facts and the vilification of all who observed and reported them. Mr. Braid, by a bold manœuvre, possessed himself of some, at any rate, among the facts, and, by putting a forged ticket upon them, justified himself before the world for continuing to vilify their real discoverers — for continuing to swim at ease with the stream of bigotry — and so afforded his confrères an opportunity of escaping from the inconvenience of being at war with notorious experience without incurring the humiliation of confessing that they had previously been in the wrong.

Braid's theory of hypnotism was set forth in the first instance in a little volume from his pen, published in 1843, under the title "Neurypnology; or the Rationale of Nervous Sleep, considered in relation to Animal Magnetism." This was an expansion of an address Mr. Braid delivered at a meeting of the British Association held in Manchester in 1842. The author avows that he was led to his conclusions by certain phenomena he witnessed at a séance conducted by M. Lafontaine, a mesmerist, but he writes rather irritably to maintain the originality of his views that seem at once to have been referred, on their first enunciation, by his critics to previous experimentalists, especially M. Bertrand and the Abbé Faria. He is specially eager to make out that his processes are quite different from anything previously known. He says, "I have now entirely separated hypnotism from animal magnetism. I consider it to be merely a simple, speedy, and certain mode of throwing the nervous system into a new condition which may be rendered eminently available in the cure of certain disorders." He attended M. Lafontaine's séance because he considered mesmeric phenomena "a system of collusion

or delusion, or of excited imagination, sympathy or imitation. . . . That night I saw nothing to diminish but rather to confirm my previous prejudices." However, "at the next conversazione, six nights afterwards, *one* fact, the inability of a patient to open his eyelids, arrested my attention. I considered that to be a real phenomenon."

He watched this case especially and felt assured he had discovered a cause. He at once set to work with experiments of his own to prove "that the inability of the patient to open his eyes was caused by paralyzing the levator muscles of the eyelids, through their continued action during the protracted fixed stare." Operating with subjects of his own and constraining them to fatigue the muscles in question by a prolonged upward gaze, he soon obtained the complete hypnotic trance, together with all the now familiar symptoms — rigidity of the limbs at the command of the operator, great exaltation of the senses, liability to hallucination, imposed by the operator, and curative effects in cases of illness where the hypnotic trance was induced with the curative intention. There is something fairly ludicrous and not a little contemptible in the

way Mr. Braid calmly passes on to deal with these phenomena as the results of *his* method and *his* discovery, when he sets out with the assumption that everything of the same kind accomplished by his predecessors was imposture, and that he picked out from mesmerism the one fact that was true, — that people could not open their eyes if the levator muscles were paralyzed by previous staring. One can hardly understand how vanity could blind him to the glaring absurdity of his own position. If fatigue of the levator muscles had anything to do with the matter, that cause would not extend to effects ranging beyond the eyelids. Mr. Braid dropped upon the curious facts of phreno-mesmerism, which show different propensities in a mesmerized subject stimulated to unwonted activity by touching the corresponding organs of the brain. Piety, benevolence, cupidity, can, by his own showing, be played upon in this way with a subject who is "hypnotized," and yet he still keeps in the forefront of his treatise on all experiments of this nature, his original silly guess that the state in which they become possible is due to the fatigue of certain muscles in the eyelids.

Mr. Braid in reality must have been a

mesmerist of considerable force, without knowing enough of the subject he arrogantly despised to understand the methods by which his results were accomplished; for he evidently obtained an extraordinarily large percentage of successes with the people he experimented on. But he has received so much undue credit of late from modern writers on the subject, especially in this country, that it is worth while to show, in opposition to the indignant claim for originality he puts forward, that there was nothing original even in his misapprehensions. One of the best — or least objectionable — modern books on the subject, Dr. Moll's "Hypnotism" (translated from the German), skims the history of mesmerism at the outset, and says: "The whole doctrine received a great impetus through the Abbé Faria. . . . In 1814–15 he showed by experiments, whose results he published, that no unknown force was necessary for the production of the phenomena; the cause of the sleep, he said, was in the person who was to be sent to sleep; all was subjective." This is the main principle of hypnotism and of suggestion of which Faria, even then, made use in inducing sleep. Two other investiga-

tors in France must be mentioned, Bertrand and Noizet, who paved the way for the doctrine of suggestion in spite of much inclination to animal magnetism.

Thus Mr. Braid is glorified in modern articles and books on hypnotism, as the man who extracted the real truth of the subject from the confusion left by foolish enthusiasts or impostors in the beginning, and put us all on a scientific foundation, in spite of the fact that his view is not only a gigantic blunder, absurdly at variance with the facts, even as reported by himself — but even as a blunder, no better than a plagiary.

The Manchester surgeon's reasoning would have been blown to atoms by contemporary critics if it had been opposed to instead of chiming in with conventional prejudice. But fashion soon becomes an ample cloak for bad logic, and, one after another, modern writers, if drawn to the subject of mesmeric phenomena at all, date their chronology from the year 1 of the Braidian era. Even the treatise on "Hypnotism," by Albert Moll, of Berlin, though in some respects the best of the recent volumes of the Braidian school, is infected with its fundamental principle. I hope to show shortly

that the real literature of mesmerism lies in the background, behind the shower of occasional essays brought forth by the vogue of Dr. Charcot's experiments, but it may be as well, in the first instance, to complete the account I have just given of Braid's own work, by noticing some of those which follow in his footsteps.

Dr. Moll's book is not without merit as an epitome of the subject from the limited modern standpoint. It contains a fairly reasonable and impartial though hasty survey of the rise and progress of mesmerism from the time of Mesmer onward to the present day, also an account of the different methods employed by different schools of mesmerists in inducing the various mesmeric phenomena. The writer chiefly errs in concentrating his attention too much on recent results, and in dealing with the phenomena of hypnotic suggestion as though they constituted an entirely new departure in human knowledge. He justly rebukes some modern scientists who treat hypnotic experiments with contempt, but says "so long as science does not examine everything practically and without prejudice, the great delusions of which animal magnetism, etc., make use will continue

to exist," — thus himself treating with contempt the branches of his own subject with which he happens to be unacquainted. In conclusion, he says: "In spite of the progress which the exact sciences have made, we must not for a moment forget that the inner connection between the body and the mental processes is utterly unknown to us. Under these circumstances we should not refuse to examine the apparently inexplicable." Certainly the representatives of modern physical science are utterly without knowledge concerning the relations of mind and body, but that is not true of all mankind, as occult students are aware, and the annals of the higher mesmerism go far to point out hopeful paths of investigation in that direction. But the value even of mesmerism as an aid to such researches may be reduced to zero, if we calmly ignore all that the greatest investigators of the past have accomplished, and devote ourselves exclusively to the superficial phenomena rediscovered in the last few years by the hypnotists whose chosen designation marks them out as people who have deliberately elected to ignore the greatest work done by their predecessors.

Two French writers, MM. Alfred Binet

and Charles Féré, the latter assistant physician at the Salpêtrière in Paris, have published in London a book in English which is *called* "Animal Magnetism," perhaps simply to avoid repeating the title "Hypnotism," already so frequently used; but it might just as well have been called by the expression so popular for the moment. It is introduced to the reader as written in the environment of the Salpêtrière; it is based on the notion that there is but one hypnotism, and that Charcot is its prophet.

The keynote of the volume, as an interpretation of the phenomena it deals with, may be found in the following sentences from the beginning of an early chapter: "As far as its mode of production is concerned, hypnotic sleep does not essentially differ from natural sleep, of which it is in fact only a modification, and all the causes which produce fatigue are capable of producing hypnosis in those who are subject to it. . . . Sensorial excitements produce hypnosis in two ways, — when they are strong and abrupt, or when they are faint and continued for a prolonged period."

It is difficult to criticise such a theory as this in moderate terms. It is difficult to get

behind the mind of a man who can think that a condition in which people can suffer a leg to be cut off without knowing it is something akin to natural sleep and to be properly described as only a modification of it. Certainly in one sense "death and his brother sleep" are akin, but rather in poetic fancy than in the pages of sober science. If one thing is said to be a modification of another, the meaning surely is that it does not differ greatly from it in essential character. In the mesmeric trance not only do we meet with astounding effects of anæsthesia, — when a pinch of the arm would be enough to wake anybody from "natural sleep," — but also an entirely new condition of the intellectual faculties utterly cut off by oblivion before the subject comes out of the trance, from the waking consciousness. Who has known the natural sleep in which the sleeper is able to converse freely on recondite subjects quite unfamiliar to him in his waking state? and yet it is a common experience of mesmerism that this is possible in the magnetic trance. If MM. Binet and Féré had said, "In the narrow and limited phase of mesmeric conditions, with which we are alone concerned, there is some analogy be-

tween what we call hypnosis and ordinary sleep," the statement would hardly be accurate; but when put forward on the basis of a general assumption that the so-called hypnosis embraces all that is true and real in mesmerism, it is nothing less than absurd.

In fact, the whole theory of the Charcot school depends upon a studious disregard of all the facts of experience that do not square with it. For instance, in the book before us we read of "manœuvres which formerly led to the belief that it is possible to magnetize from a distance," and then this belief is disposed of by the supposition that in such cases the subject had been told to expect the effect from a distance at a certain time, and therefore the results have only been due to "suggestion in the waking state." In reality all the records of mesmerism, both early and recent, teem with illustrations of the way in which magnetic influence from a distance has been successfully exerted upon persons quite unprepared to expect it. From de Puységur's time down to some of the recent experiments of the Society for Psychical Research, the fact has been substantiated over and over again, but it does not fit in with the favorite Braid-Charcot hypothesis, so *tant pis pour les faits* as usual.

The more attention we pay to modern writers on hypnotism, the more those of us who are also familiar with the earlier writers will be struck by the fact that above all their other characteristics the modern hypnotists from Braid downwards are *not* those who have put the investigation of mesmeric phenomena on a scientific basis. They have done just the reverse; they have degraded an inquiry which was opened just a hundred years ago in a truly scientific spirit, into an attempt to bolster up an unintelligent prejudice. For the truly scientific spirit leads people to study *all* the facts of experience in the particular department of nature concerned, and to refrain from premature theorizing in directions from which some of these facts warn them off. There was no premature theorizing in the case of Mesmer and his followers when they adopted the hypothesis of a mesmeric or magnetic fluid. All the facts known to them up to that time squared with that hypothesis, and if their successors had been loyal to truth and had gone on testing the early hypothesis by later experience they would have found it supported by everything that has been discovered since, and in no way refuted by the discovery that *some* of

the phenomena produced by the agency of the magnetic fluid were also susceptible of being induced — more or less imperfectly — in other ways as well. But latter-day investigators have not been loyal to truth. They have chosen for consideration only those facts and experiences which suited them and have calmly ignored the rest. Incidentally, it is true, they have done a public service; they have set afloat a general belief that mesmerism after all is a reality, and but for them perhaps it would only at this day have been a reality for isolated students of occult science. But the limitations to which their own theories and methods condemn their thinking are deplorable, and stand at this moment terribly in the way of any real progress in the cultivation of the public mind along the channels of research which mesmerism, correctly appreciated, opens out.

The principle of study, which it is my foremost desire to impress on those who will listen to me, is this: Let all who wish to read about mesmerism go back to the fountain-head of the subject and explore the voluminous writings of the early French school, of which I propose to speak more fully in the next few pages. In that literature the

real foundations of our knowledge of mesmerism were laid. There we shall find, it is true, some traces of a most pardonable, if not praiseworthy, excitement and enthusiasm in reference to the wonderful beneficence of the new revelation which mesmeric discoveries seemed to embody. There we shall read of some procedure in which we shall fail to discern the true working of Mesmer's own ideas; but at the time a prodigious excitement was operative with large numbers of people deeply stirred by wonder and admiration, and many cures were worked through the influence of an overwhelming faith in association with an external ceremonial that probably had little, if any, objective effect. Similar results have been observed within recent years at Lourdes, and only the other day at Trèves, in connection with the exhibition of the "Holy Coat." But persons who justly conceive that touching a Holy Coat, of which even the holiness is apocryphal, would not do *them* any good, make a mistake unworthy of the superior sense they take credit for if they fail to realize that *full belief* in a Holy Coat or a holy anything is a real force within the organisms of the persons inspired by it. Mesmer's *baquets* and

de Puységur's magnetized trees may not have worked in the same way as the "passes" and magnetic currents with which those early experimentalists sought to coördinate them. But *they worked*, and therefore the writers in question honestly recorded the facts concerning them, not yet having learned from Mr. Braid and the hypnotizers that the way to put their inquiry on a scientific basis was to pick and choose among the experiences they acquired, so as only to father those which were calculated to please a self-sufficient public opinion around them.

To put aside the writings and experiments that relate to the present distorted revival of mesmerism, under a misleading pseudonym, and to turn back to the pages of de Puységur and Deleuze, Ricard, Gauthier, Teste, and du Potet, is like passing from an evil and stifling to a pure moral atmosphere.

CHAPTER II.

THE MESMERIC FORCE.

BEFORE tracing our way back to the beginnings of modern mesmerism in the very earliest years of the century, it may be well to pause for a while about half-way back at the stage attained by Baron von Reichenbach. His researches may fairly be taken as the groundwork of a correct theory of mesmerism. The book in which they are all brought out, generally known to students of this sort of literature as "Reichenbach's Researches," bears in reality a somewhat ponderous title. It is called on the title page of the English translation by Dr. Ashburner "Physico-Physiological Researches on the Dynamics of Magnetism, Electricity, Heat, Light, Crystallization, and Chemism in their relations to Vital Force, by Baron Charles von Reichenbach." The author had lighted on the discovery that sensitives in illness could see luminous emanations or flames issuing from the poles of magnets. At that

time, as we shall see later on, the faculties which constitute a person what we now call a sensitive, were supposed to manifest themselves during illness only, and they were sought for by inquirers among persons suffering from some form of sickness. With the painstaking care of a true man of science, Baron von Reichenbach repeated his experiments with magnets with a great number of subjects, taking care of course to test the reality of their power to see what they said they saw, by making them find out his magnets in dark rooms, without having been told where they had been placed, and in other ways. Then he found that the luminous brushes or flames were to be seen emanating from crystals as well as from magnets. The experiments which brought out these facts were elaborate and protracted, but soon acquired a new development almost by accident.

Baron von Reichenbach discovered that luminous appearances, similar to those emanating from magnets and crystals, proceeded from the human hand in a great many cases, and he dropped upon this fact quite by chance in the first instance, without having set out on this inquiry with any pre-

conceived theory. He was experimenting with one of his sensitives with a magnet in the dark, and she was playing with the luminous flame which she could perceive coming out of the ends, when he in the darkness put his hand between her and the magnet. She immediately began to play in the same way with emanations from the hand, and spoke to the bystanders of five little flames which leaped up and down in the air. She did not see the hand itself, and at first supposed the five little flames to be some independent phenomenon. Other persons present then raised their hands before her, and from various fingers she saw a similar light emitted more or less energetically. This sensitive, Miss Reichel, appears to have been the first in connection with whom Baron von Reichenbach broke down an erroneous belief which had hitherto prevailed with all the earlier mesmerists. As we shall see when coming to review the early literature, almost all the experimentalists, closely following on Mesmer, became possessed of the idea that the clairvoyance they discovered in their patients, and which almost always had reference to the patients' illnesses, was necessarily extinguished on the recovery of

health; and they thus drifted into a way of supposing that the power was in some way morbid in its character, that it related exclusively to pathological conditions, and ceased to be effective when these were no longer present. In reference to Miss Reichel, Baron von Reichenbach announces as a wonderful fact that even after she got well she continued to see the magnetic flames, the crystal light, and the flames on the hand whenever it was dark enough. On inquiry it appeared that she had possessed this faculty even from childhood, and had two sisters who, like herself, saw these luminous appearances when other persons could see nothing.

Further experiments with other sensitives soon enabled the Baron to generalize as a principle, and to declare, that fiery brushes of light issue from the points of the fingers of healthy men in the same manner as from the poles of crystals. Readers who may take up the Baron's book now, especially with the object of getting information about the vital mesmeric fluid, will be tantalized to find how much more of his attention he devoted to mechanical sources of the luminous effect than to those having direct reference

to mesmeric energy. But the truth is that this characteristic of his research gives it peculiar importance at the present day to students of mesmerism as a science, because it links the vital energy of the human frame with other great forces in nature, and brings our thinking into line with those great philosophical speculations which always seek for unity in nature. A very disjointed and illogical conception of the cosmos is that which regards anything in man as altogether peculiar to himself as a manifestation of nature. Just as his physique is related in various ways to the matter around us out of which it is built up by the subtle chemistry of living organisms, and just as philosophical convictions must force us to the conclusion that the highest spiritual element in the human soul has in some way a common origin with the Universal Spirit from whose energy the whole of what is called creation must have proceeded, so also it is only reasonable to suppose that these intermediate forces with which we are now dealing, the vital forces which are something intermediate in their character between matter and spirit, must themselves be related to some corresponding agent of wide diffusion through the universe.

Mesmer guessed at this with the inspiration of genius, and ridiculed as he was by the learned folly of his time, the latest coördination of all our knowledge having reference to occult forces is steadily bringing us back to the position he took up. Let us profit, therefore, by von Reichenbach's researches even where they do not directly refer to manifestations of vital energy proceeding from living organisms. Especially let us profit by some very interesting and suggestive experiments he tried with sunlight as a source of energy discernible in the case of magnets. He wished to ascertain whether sunlight falling on one end of a copper wire would superinduce any conditions in the other end when this should be examined in a dark room by one of his sensitives. The copper wire by itself presented no appearance that could be remarked, but when the other end was put out into the sunshine a crystallic luminosity became perceptible in a weak degree as emanating from the other end in the dark room. The next experiment had to do with a superior arrangement of this apparatus. The wire was attached at one end to a plate of copper, and this plate of copper was exposed to the sunlight. Under these condi-

tions a powerful manifestation of the luminous energy, which Baron von Reichenbach eventually calls the "odic force," was manifested. The importance of this discovery — which von Reichenbach checks in a great many ways, and elaborates with a great variety of substances besides copper — resides in the obvious reflection that the sun's light is the great source of vital energy which evokes organic conditions of matter from the inorganic world. The whole vegetable creation is the first storehouse of vital energy, whatever it may be, and this it clearly derives directly from the sun's rays. That the animal kingdom derives its vital forces from the translation of vegetable organisms into those adapted to its own requirements is equally obvious, and the sun's light must thus be regarded as indirectly the source of animal life. How far it might influence, refresh, or stimulate that life by direct application is unknown to us, only because modern science has been so densely incapable of pursuing lines of thought which do not hinge directly on to any of its own material achievements.

Among Baron von Reichenbach's experiments, one long series which I must not stop

to recapitulate in detail, has reference to the polar character of the odic force; distinct analogies between the polar character of ordinary magnetism and that of the vital energy being elaborately traced.

Von Reichenbach's first volume, though published in the English translation in 1850, relates to a series of experiments which were apparently concluded about the year 1848. Attacks of all kinds were of course leveled against him, and his results treated as inconclusive. Recognizing himself that they rested on a foundation which was narrow, considering the importance of the principles to be established, being the result of experiments with five different sensitives, he set to work in the two following years to expand them enormously. When his second volume was brought out he was enabled to supply a list of sixty sensitive persons, men and women, mothers and maidens, children and aged persons, high, low, rich, and poor, with whom he had repeated the experiences of his first investigation; and now he had come satisfactorily to the principle that illness had nothing to do with the matter as regards the power of perceiving the odic fluid. Perfectly healthy and strong persons

are included in considerable numbers in his new list. It is little less than amazing that such an enormous body of results as in these two volumes von Reichenbach brought together should have remained for half a century almost unnoticed by those who arrogate to themselves the title of natural philosophers, and that it should still be merely a record of interest for an isolated few whose intuitions and foresight enable them to discern in the forces appertaining to other than the physical planes of nature, the possibilities of an advancement for human knowledge that will far eclipse, some time in the future, the achievements of which the nineteenth century has been so proud.

Even before Reichenbach's time some of the early experimentalists of Mesmer's own epoch had come into contact with the fact that luminous emanations could be seen in connection with hands employed to project the mesmeric fluid, and even Bertrand, of whom, amongst others, I shall have to speak shortly, acknowledges that his sensitives assure him that they see a fluid emanating from his own fingers, although he himself is not disposed to believe them, and constructs an elaborate theory of his own almost as

illogical as some of those presented to us by the most modern writers, to account for the already enormous accumulation of mesmeric experience.

For the moment, of course, the mesmeric fluid theory is altogether out of fashion, and the most recent inquirers who have set to work within the last few years to rediscover the facts already included in books written from fifty to eighty years ago, have been conspicuous illustrations of one very common human frailty in reference to all advances of knowledge. When, for the first time, their attention has been turned to a subject neglected up till then, they have acted as though their own conversion to an appreciation of the facts constituted a sort of new departure for those facts. There is something positively ludicrous to readers familiar with the earlier books in the great library of mesmeric literature, in the way the least intelligent of modern students invariably treat the whole subject, if they handle it at all, as something which they, for the first time, at last have ascertained to be really worth inquiry, and in reference to which it is now important that mankind should begin, in company with them, to observe facts and lay

a foundation for reasoning. We have been confronted in the last few years with a deluge of hypnotic literature, but most of the books written to amplify the hypnotic hypothesis could hardly, one would think, have been written if the authors had had the good sense to acquaint themselves with all that had been previously done in the line of their own investigations. It seems, as I have said already, rather as though the object of the manœuvre was to escape from an untenable position, than to exhibit any new truth, when the first exponents of the hypnotic theory adopted the principle they represent.

To identify those who were really the first exponents of this principle might be difficult now. Bertrand at all events anticipated Braid by half a lifetime, though Braid was so satisfied of his own originality that he ridicules, as we have seen, with the utmost possible indignation, some contemporary critics who endeavored to introduce him to his predecessors in error. *Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerint.*

Before leaving this branch of the subject let me add that Reichenbach's experiments, as will have been seen, lent a better justification than is generally supposed to exist

for the habit into which early mesmeric writers fell of calling the mesmeric fluid "magnetism." This term has rather exasperated modern scientific thinkers, who complain, not without apparent reason, that nothing in the behavior or phenomena of what is called animal magnetism bears any more relation to the force known as magnetism in the laboratories, than to gravitation or chemical affinity or any other force of nature we like to name. But first of all the whole literature of this subject is so saturated with the expression "magnetism" as applied to all the phenomena with which mesmerists deal, that it would be hardly possible at the present day to comb it free of that expression; and, secondly, we have, at all events, no better term that can be employed to take its place. Further than this, so very close a correspondence is observed by people who can see beyond the ordinary boundary of visual perception, between the emanations of physical magnets both of the permanent and electrically excited orders, and, on the other hand, the emanations proceeding from the fingers and head of a mesmerist, — and obviously concerned in some way with the so-called magnetic trance of his subject, —

that in the present state of our knowledge I think it would be a great mistake to quarrel too hastily with the term "animal magnetism." Personally, I believe that to be a designation which much more accurately defines the great majority of mesmeric phenomena than any other we could employ. It certainly covers a hundred such phenomena for every one which fits in with the hypnotic hypothesis, and is therefore the best abstract term to employ next after the still more convenient, because non-connotative, expression derived from the name of the unfortunate and much abused Mesmer.

CHAPTER III.

THE REAL LITERATURE OF MESMERISM.

MESMER himself — Frederick Anthony Mesmer — according to Picard, was born at Weiler on the Rhine, in the year 1734. He studied medicine in his youth and settled as a doctor in Vienna, where he ultimately married advantageously. In 1766 he wrote a dissertation on "The Influences of the Planets on the Human Body," which drew upon him much ridicule and professional opposition. The attempt to account for this influence led him to make the experiments which introduced him to the facts with which his name has been since indissolubly associated. At first he worked entirely with magnets, obtained some cures by this means, and wrote "A Letter to a Foreign Physician on the Magnetic Remedy." But he was much persecuted for his audacity. For the further development of his inquiries he established a private hospital in his own house for the relief of destitute invalids. He soon

came to the conclusion that the magnetic rods with which his first experiments were made, only served as conductors for a fluid emanating from his own person. To this he at once gave the name Animal Magnetism, and theorized boldly concerning its diffusion through nature. But he was accused of deceiving his public, and of having magnetic rods concealed about his person — an accusation which is very amusing, in view of the fact that, when he really used magnetic rods, he was ridiculed for expecting to obtain curative results by such means. His reputation was assailed and his fortune impaired. He sought some more favorable theatre for the development of his experiments, and moved from Vienna to Paris in 1777. Two years later he published a short treatise, entitled "Mémoire sur la découverte du Magnétisme Animal." The theory put forward rested on Mesmer's conviction that "there exists a reciprocal influence between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and animated beings." The medium of this influence he conceived to be "a very subtle fluid pervading the whole universe, which from its nature is capable of receiving, propagating, and communicating every impulse

of motion. The reciprocal action is subject to certain mechanical laws which have not yet been discovered. . . . The animal body experiences the alternative effects of this agent, which, by insinuating itself into the substance of the nerves, affects them immediately." Mesmer's suggestions to this effect were treated by the men of science in Paris at the time with contempt. One, indeed, of the members of the medical faculty of Paris, Dr. D'Eslon, became a warm partisan of Mesmer's views. But, instead of inquiring into them, the Faculty suspended Dr. D'Eslon for a year, and ordered that, at the expiration of this time, his name should be erased from the list of the society, unless he recanted his declaration of belief. The public meanwhile became interested to some extent in the new ideas, as the fame of various magnetic cures had been spread about. Various persons testified to the fact that Mesmer had cured them, but the public journals ridiculed him, and the medical profession reviled him. In 1781 he published a work entitled "Précis Historique des Faits relatif au Magnétisme Animal." The opposition he encountered only stimulated his own enthusiasm, and led him to

proclaim magnetism as a panacea. He declared "there is but one health, one disease, one remedy." An unfortunate private misunderstanding between himself and Dr. D'Eslon led him to move from Paris to Spa. Ultimately he returned to Paris, and then took a step which has led to much animadversion on his character. He established a secret society, under the name of "The Harmony," where he initiated pupils into the mystery of his process, taking from them fees of a hundred louis d'or each. By this means "he is said," according to Mr. J. C. Colquhoun, a relatively recent writer on mesmerism, to have realized a considerable fortune. M. Deleuze, a leading writer on the subject, justifies his action in this matter by pointing out that his whole professional prospects were merged in his magnetic discoveries, which had ruined him as an ordinary doctor. He took the fees from wealthy people, and is said to have remitted them when would-be pupils were less prosperous. Morever, admits Mr. Colquhoun, it is very doubtful whether he really acquired the large sums he is alleged to have received.

In 1784 a Royal Commission of orthodox *savants* was appointed to inquire into the

claims advanced on behalf of the theory of animal magnetism. The report was unfavorable, after an inquiry which the representatives of the new science declared to have been improperly conducted; though one eminent physician (de Jussieu) refused to subscribe to the report of his colleagues, and, after a great deal of attention paid to the subject, published an independent report of his own, entirely favorable to Mesmer. Even the general body of the Commissioners admitted the effects produced by the magnetic treatment, but repudiated Mesmer's theory of a fluid, and preferred hypotheses concerning "sensitive excitement, imagination, and imitation."

Mesmer eventually retired in disgust to Switzerland, and died at an advanced age in 1815, closing his career, as he had begun it, by practicing magnetic cures gratuitously for the benefit of the poor. Beyond a certain fancy for surrounding his mode of life in Paris with a flavor of mystery and theatrical effect, it is difficult to find any circumstances in Mesmer's life that afford the slightest color for the offensive terms in which he has constantly been spoken of, even by some students and adherents of his great subject.

During Mesmer's life the phenomena of animal magnetism, to which attention was chiefly called, were those connected with the cure of disease. Many societies were formed as branches of that first set on foot, and while on the one hand the orthodox medical scientists of the day continued to treat with contempt the belief of those who declared that such and such results were accomplished, the volume of experience rolled on for all who paid attention to the work in progress. A very ludicrous aspect is thus put, for students of mesmeric literature, on the ignorant conceit of the dominant majority, who were all the while denying the possibility of that which was actually occurring. After the foolish bigotry of the doctors at large had thus been at war with the plain facts of the case for more than forty years, medical mesmerism at last received a grudging recognition from orthodox science in 1831. At this date a committee of the medical section of the French Royal Academy of Sciences was appointed to examine into the alleged phenomena of animal magnetism. The report made by this committee, after long and careful investigations, constitutes a remarkable record of experiments on the

physical phenomena of the mesmeric state; it also goes at length into cases in which patients under medical mesmeric treatment were clairvoyant in their trances, and accurately prophetic concerning the subsequent course of their maladies. The report, signed by nine members of the Academy, is apologetic in regard to its assurance that the alleged phenomena were true; but the members say in effect, How can we help ourselves? We have taken every possible precaution to guard ourselves from mistakes, and we cannot resist complete conviction. An English translation of this report, by Mr. J. C. Colquhoun, was published in 1833.

From this date the reality of the phenomena of mesmerism, as far as those are associated with its aspects as a curative agent, as a method of producing anæsthesia, and as a means of producing abnormal mental states in which a mesmerized subject may foresee the future progress of his own disorder, must be regarded as finally established, although scientific and educated men up to our own day maintain an attitude of incredulity on the subject, which puts them, for better instructed persons, on the intellectual level

of the African savage, who does not believe in ice. Since 1831, moreover, the experience which has accumulated on our hands concerning the higher and more purely psychic phenomena of the mesmeric state is such that the same remark really applies to every one, however cultivated along some lines of mental activity, who remains in an attitude of incredulity concerning the typical phenomena of clairvoyance and mesmeric thought transfer.

As far back as 1808, Dr. Pététin published in Paris a book called "Electricité Animale," of which the well-known later writer on the same subject, Dr. Esdaile, says: "Dr. Pététin's cases alone are sufficient to establish the reality of natural clairvoyance." Plentiful testimony will be found in this book concerning the powers of mesmeric subjects of a certain kind to read the contents of closed letters and books, and to exercise many other faculties of perception quite independently of the ordinary sense.

Among the earliest of Mesmer's disciples, the Marquis Chastenet de Puységur has left voluminous writings on the subject of his own prolonged and varied practice as a curative mesmerist. The edition of his works

before me is in four volumes, the last dated 1809, but this is a second edition, and I gather that the first must have appeared in 1807. This is entitled "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire et à l'établissement du Magnétisme Animal." The second volume is a general continuation of the first, and the third is more especially devoted to "Recherches, expériences, et observations physiologiques sur l'homme dans l'état de somnambulisme naturel et dans le somnambulisme provoqué par l'acte magnétique." The fourth volume, published in 1812, is entitled "Les Fous, les Insensés, les Maniaques et les Frénétiques, ne seraient-ils que des Somnambules désordonnés." The whole collection of writings embodies an immense accumulation of experiences with persons clairvoyant during illness in respect to their own maladies. No recent writings on mesmerism in its medical aspect have an equal value with these, for de Puységur, working with straightforward and earnest faith in his own power of alleviating suffering with the help of Mesmer's glorious discovery, attained brilliant successes, and above all — for later students of the subject — has done unrivaled service in investigating the prophetic and

clairvoyant faculties of mesmeric patients, not only in reference to their own but in respect also of other persons' ailments. On this development of their powers he says: "Of all the facts of magnetism the most inexplicable, and above all the least conceivable, is, without doubt, that of the vision possessed by patients in a perfect state of somnambulism in reference to the sufferings of others and the knowledge which they show of the remedies and measures necessary for their cure. . . . Anyhow, although there is no known phenomena (in other branches of science) to which one can compare the faculty — the fact is nevertheless real, as certain as the other manifestations of somnambulism already recognized."

De Puységur gives full details of the cases both of this and of the simpler kinds of clairvoyance — in reference to the patients' own illnesses — that he had the opportunity of dealing with, and they are both numerous and remarkable. It seems strange that he never apparently investigated the extent to which the clairvoyant perceptions he evoked could be directed to other subjects besides those having to do with physical illness, but in the beginning mesmerism was introduced

to the world in reference almost exclusively to its medical aspects, and it was reserved for later inquirers to bring its psychological importance into view. De Puységur never seems to have expected the clairvoyance of his patients to be prolonged beyond the period of their recovery.

J. P. F. Deleuze was a voluminous, and one of the earliest, writers on mesmerism. He published several books on the subject, amongst others a critical history of animal magnetism. He himself was a Frenchman, born in 1753. He was attracted to the subject of mesmerism by reading accounts of magnetic cures in 1785, and subsequently accomplished many such cures himself. He was a naturalist attached to the Jardin des Plantes. In his "Histoire Critique du Magnétisme Animal" (Paris, 1813), he very effectually rebuts the accusations of imposture brought against Mesmer. This extraordinary man, he says, gifted with an energetic character, was carried away by the wonderful successes he obtained into an exaggerated belief in the range of his discovery, but the attitude of incredulity, on the other hand, in regard to his achievements M. Deleuze shows to be altogether unten-

able. Not only were his numerous pupils convinced of the reality of his treatment, but the assurances and proofs furnished by persons who had been cured themselves, and who had taken part in establishing societies for the cure of others, were such that no opposition or ridicule could arrest the progress of so useful and well-established a discovery. M. Deleuze himself, since he had occupied himself with magnetism, could attest that he had known more than three hundred persons who were occupied with it like himself, and who had produced or experienced its vivid effects. M. Deleuze deplores that Mesmer had not the magnanimity to make public his discoveries for the good of mankind without deriving pecuniary benefit from them, but points out that after all he had spent money to acquire the right of practicing as doctor, and by all ordinary considerations was entitled to take money for teaching pupils. M. Deleuze devotes himself chiefly to establishing the reality of the magnetic influence as a curative agent by records of cases and protracted arguments, and in his second volume gives an interesting summary of the books on the subject that had appeared up to the date at which he wrote. His

"Practical Instructions on Animal Magnetism" were published in 1825, and have been translated into English. The book is described by the translator as the result of a consummate experience. In 1836 an earlier admirer of Deleuze's work had written: "A new era has commenced for magnetism. Authentically recognized by the Royal Academy of Medicine in 1831, and regarded by the commission as a very curious branch of psychology and natural history, it has taken rank among positive truths. The rising generation will be prompt to cultivate the new field laid open to them. What surer guide can they take than the man who, by the superiority of his intelligence, the sagacity of his conclusions, and the example of his own life, has so powerfully contributed to the triumph of this noble discovery."

Deleuze says that his object is to give plain and simple instructions for people who wish to practice magnetism. "It is not the object of this work," he writes, "to convince men who, otherwise well-informed, still doubt the reality of magnetism." He employs the expression, "the magnetic fluid," he says, because he believes in the existence of such a fluid, though its nature is un-

known. The directions which he gives go into great detail in regard to manipulation and passes, and most later handbooks of mesmerism seem to have derived their inspiration very largely from this code of rules. The author also discusses the accessory means by which magnetic action may be increased, namely, mesmerized water, woolen and cotton cloths, plates of glass, etc. The purpose in view is almost exclusively to instruct the reader in methods of mesmerism to be employed for the cure of disease, and the book is entirely concerned with such directions, or with criticisms on various modes of mesmerizing, the risks to be avoided, and the methods that may be employed for "developing and fortifying one's self in magnetic power." A voluminous appendix, added to an American edition of the work by the translator, Mr. Hartshorn, gives an immense quantity of testimony collected by him concerning curious and remarkable cases of mesmerism.

J. J. A. Ricard, a Paris professor, is a thoroughly satisfactory exponent of mesmeric experience, who published in 1841 a volume entitled "Traité théorique et pratique du Magnétisme Animal." He must

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have been himself a mesmerist of most unusual force, and evidently combined with this attribute characteristics which, properly handled, would have made him himself a sensitive of great value, for he appears to have been a spontaneous somnambulist, capable on some occasions of writing long strings of verses in his sleep, in reference to the production of which he retained no recollection whatever in his waking state. However, this fact crops up merely incidentally; his book is devoted entirely to the record of his work, which chiefly has to do with curative mesmerism directed by the pathological clairvoyance of his patients, for with him it seemed as if almost every one who approached could be thrown into a magnetic trance. There is something very puzzling to modern practical students in the immense advantage apparently enjoyed by the early mesmerists, as compared with ourselves, in reference to the prevalent condition of people around them. In the present day we may be able to get results which when obtained are fully as good in all respects as those described by the early French writers; but the persons with whom such results are procurable seem to be dotted here

and there about the world, by ones and twos, whereas such mesmerists as M. Ricard seem always to have been puzzled if they did not succeed with the *premier venu*. Their records of distinct successes run into percentages like seventy-five or eighty of the total number of persons with whom they made experiments. Ricard treats with scorn the pretenses of some disputants to account for mesmeric phenomena by imagination, fascination, and other vague hypotheses in conflict with the simple and, to him, undeniably true theory of mesmeric fluid. The falsity of their judgment he thinks may easily be demonstrated, and he records a case in which in order to prove the reality of his own position he magnetizes one of his patients at a distance, and puts him to sleep without any expectation on his part that the experiment was going to be tried. For psychological students, however, Ricard's book has claims on their interest which far transcend its importance as, what it certainly is also, a very advanced and intelligent treatise on curative mesmerism. Ricard appears to me to have been the first experimentalist, or at all events the first writer, who gets entirely free of the belief that clairvoyance is a merely

pathological condition, and to whom the dazzlingly interesting phenomenon of clairvoyance, having to do with other states of nature, presents itself in the light of its real importance. He gives a very full account of his first experience in this region of inquiry with a girl named Adèle Lefrey, who exhibited a new kind of lucidity at the conclusion of some curative treatment received at her mesmerist's hands. It may be worth while here to translate a short passage illustrative for all who have themselves been privileged to work with sensitives qualified to discern higher states of nature, of what may be called the inevitable routine of impressions such people go through in the first instance. M. Ricard's Adèle said to him words conveying exactly the same ideas which I have heard uttered by sensitives under my own influence, young girls to whom the A B C of mesmerism as a branch of knowledge was wholly unknown. M. Ricard writes: "She was near the completion of her cure, when, in the midst of some new medical instructions which she was giving, she said to me in a singular tone, 'You hear what he orders me?' 'Who,' I asked, 'is ordering you anything?' 'Why, mon-

sieur, do you not hear him?' 'No, I neither hear nor see any one.' 'Ah, that is true,' she replied, 'you sleep while I am awake.' 'What do you mean? You dream, my dear child; you pretend that I sleep, when I have my eyes open and I can appreciate all that passes before me, while I know that I actually hold you in command by my magnetic influence, and that it only depends upon my will to bring you back to the state you were in recently. You believe yourself awake because you speak to me, and you have to a certain extent your free will, although you could not open your eyelids, and might be plunged in an instant into the most profound slumber. You do not reflect upon what you are saying.' 'You do not understand me, monsieur, but that is nothing surprising.' 'You are asleep,' I replied. 'I am, on the contrary, as completely awake as we shall all be some day in the future. I will explain myself more clearly; all that you see at present is gross, material; you distinguish apparent forms; the real beauties escape you. How could it be otherwise? Your spirit is cramped, obscured, by the exterior impressions that your material senses give you. It can only reach out feebly, while my cor-

poreal sensations are actually annihilated, while my soul is almost disintegrated from its ordinary fetters. I see what is invisible to your eyes, I hear what your ears cannot hear, I understand what for you is incomprehensible. For example, you do not see what emanates from yourself and comes to me when you magnetize me; I, on the contrary, see it very clearly; at each pass you direct towards me I see a little column of fiery dust which comes from the end of your fingers and seems to incorporate itself in me. Then when you isolate me I seem surrounded by an atmosphere of this fiery dust, which is often the reason why objects of which I seek to distinguish the forms take a ruddy tinge for me. I hear, when I desire it, a sound that is made at a distance, sounds which may arise a hundred leagues from here. In a word, I am not obliged to wait till things come to me, I can go to them wherever they are, and appreciate them more correctly than any one could who is not in a similar state to that in which I find myself.' "

This is a perfectly sound and correct exposition of the state in which the liberated Ego of the sensitive finds itself. Phrases of precisely similar import have, as I say, been

given to me more than once; and I venture to say that any one in whom the faculty of clairvoyance, in reference to other planes of nature, is possible will, on first entering into that state, if questioned, take the same view of the position.

Under the title "Archiv für den Thierischen Magnetismus," an immense collection of writings on mesmerism in all its branches, as then understood, was published in Germany in 1817. This work is in twelve volumes, edited by Dr. von Eschenmayer, Dr. Kiefer, and Dr. Nasse. It consists of narratives of experiments and magnetic cures, and careful critical essays, including speculations on the meaning of clairvoyant prevision which show a more intelligent attitude of mind on the part of the German writers of that date than was common in England.

Baron du Potet, sometimes called de Sennevoy, after an ancestral domain, is to be ranked among the early French writers on mesmerism, though he lived to within a few years ago. He was born at Sennevoy, in the Department of the Yonne, in 1796. He has given us a sketch of his own career at the beginning of one of his later books, and it appears that he was first attracted to the

study of human magnetism in 1815. The whole subject burst upon him as a revelation. "*En sortant de ce premier entretien*," he says, "*j'étais magnétiseur.*" He at once obtained the mesmeric trance with the two persons on whom he first tried his hand. He became acquainted with Deleuze and de Puységur. He undertook the cure of some patients; dazzled with the results he entered himself regularly for the study of medicine. As a mesmerist he rapidly distanced his teachers. He boldly confronted the ridicule and opposition of conventional science. He gave gratuitous courses of instruction in mesmerism from the year 1826, and at the same period began to write on the subject. He published a Journal called the "Propagateur du Magnétisme;" also in 1838, in London, a volume entitled "An Introduction to the Study of Animal Magnetism." This is an admirable book. It shows us the author still unable to believe that the tenacity of ignorant prejudice could hold out against an overwhelming demonstration of the truth. "Hitherto," he says, "there has been a disinclination to entertain this investigation, but I trust the evidence now adduced will tend to dispel the prejudice that

can only have arisen from the science not having been yet fairly represented." The book opens with a good review of the history of the subject. Speaking of Mesmer, the Baron says: "Surrounded as he was by enemies, both public and private, his unassuming manners, his manifest sincerity, his earnest yet silent enthusiasm, and, above all, his benevolent disposition, conciliated for him the esteem of persons of almost all ranks and pretensions." Later on the Baron goes into a full and detailed description of the physical and psychical phenomena of mesmerism as illustrated by his own experience. His records are of great instructive value and would alone be sufficient to establish the reality of clairvoyance as a fact in nature, even if they were not, as they are, merely one set of such experiences among a great number.

The only fault that can be found with du Potet's books is, that their style is a little inflated or bombastic. In this respect he is, however, the product of French and not English literary traditions, and throughout he is immensely impressed with the prodigious spiritual importance of the discoveries with which he is dealing. As he himself

says, he felt a new philosophy forming itself in his mind around these germs; it was nebulous and undefined, but stupendous. He was filled with ideas that he felt to be too far advanced for his generation. He only ventured in 1845 to give them some expression in a work entitled "Essai sur l'enseignement philosophique du Magnétisme." But though this volume is relatively timid and reserved, the author was quickly outgrowing the limits of magnetic practice as familiar to his predecessors. He was becoming something more than a mesmerist — an occultist, and eventually, under somewhat too theatrical or sensational a title, he printed an important quarto called "La Magie Dévoilée," which was never published, in the ordinary sense of the word, but delivered to a few persons under definite pledges taken from them in regard to the use they would make of it. The experiments described in this book, though startling and almost entirely of psychological interest, do not really outrun those related in the "Animal Magnetism" in scientific value for the student of mesmerism. The Baron seems to have been himself almost alarmed by the power he acquired over all kinds and conditions of

people by causing them to look at signs and figures he drew with charcoal upon the floor. He got these signs from books on mediæval magic, and was apparently inclined to attach too much objective importance to the diagrams themselves, thinking that other people would be able to obtain his results by following the same procedure, and that powers of a dangerous character might thus be acquired through his teaching by persons of evilly disposed nature if his instructions were carelessly disseminated. He did not realize how far the magic lay in his own magnetic force — how little of it had to do with the signs.

In 1840 Baron du Potet published another volume called "A Course of Magnetism in Seven Lessons," and in the course of his addresses to his pupils, in themselves a numerous body, to whom he dedicates this volume, he indulges in some very scornful language concerning the obstinate incredulity exhibited by the scientific world at large in regard to the accumulated facts of mesmeric experience.

M. Alexandre Bertrand seems to have been the first writer who quarreled with the straightforward theory of the magnetic

fluid adopted by Mesmer, de Puységur and Deleuze. In 1826 he published a treatise entitled "Du Magnétisme Animal en France," in which he promulgated a theory of his own on what he calls *l'Extase* — the condition of those whom the earlier writers described as *somnambules*. This is not a work of any value in itself, and is chiefly remarkable as showing how very little originality there was in Mr. Braid's later claim to have put the whole subject on a new and scientific footing. M. Bertrand incidentally admits that his own *somnambules* bear testimony to the reality of the fluid. Many of these, he says, "declare in fact that they see the fluid by means of which I exert an effect upon them coming out from my fingers." The patients with whom he worked would also declare that they discerned a peculiar taste in water that he had magnetized, and experienced pronounced effects from objects he had magnetized, such as a handkerchief, a glove, or a piece of money. For all this, however, he found a sufficient explanation in the theory that they had been possessed with such ideas before going to sleep; and for him magnetism is "*une pure chimère.*" That which he conceives to be a reality is

l'extase — "a condition into which human creatures are capable of falling, altogether distinct from any states that had been previously recognized." The argument amounts to nothing in itself, explains nothing, and is only carried on by disregarding the larger part of the phenomena admitted as facts and requiring to be brought within the area of any genuine mesmeric theory.

M. Aubin Gautier is one of the early writers who must by no means be overlooked. He seems to have written, to begin with, in 1840 a volume entitled "Introduction au Magnétisme," a volume written in a very reverent spirit, and on the basis of much careful research in ancient history, aimed at showing the wide diffusion of magnetism in one shape or another as a psychological agent in Egypt, Greece, and Rome. M. Gautier seems to have been amongst those from the first who took the subject seriously and in the spirit of an occult student. Whoever expects to find these pages amusing, he says in the beginning, "deceives himself strangely. The study and practice of magnetism demand an unheard of patience, silence, and self-control."

The book is more a review and a specula-

tion than a narrative. It rests, of course, in complete reliance on the mesmeric fluid theory, and only fails in bringing out really scientific conceptions because the writer was not himself in possession of those side lights on mesmerism which I propose to deal with directly, and without which the various phenomena themselves can never be coördinated.

In 1842 M. Gautier published his "Histoire du Somnambulisme," again sweeping the wide areas of ancient history for illustrations of his theme. This volume, including many narratives of more modern origin, gives a full account of M. Pigeaire's experience with the Académie de Médecine of Paris. M. Pigeaire was a country doctor who discovered fine clairvoyant faculties in the youngest of his daughters, Léonide, aged ten years. No experimentalists in those days seemed to have realized the lengths a clairvoyant faculty could reach to when properly cultivated, so that the only experiments tried with the girl had to do with recognizing objects and reading from books when blindfold. Her powers in this direction were brought to high perfection in a long series of private and domestic séances. When at last M. Pigeaire decided to claim

on his daughter's behalf a prize which had been offered by a member of the Académie de Médecine, the family genius was brought out of her retirement and introduced in Paris to a great number of learned observers. The prize in question had been offered by Dr. Burdin to any one who could read without the use of the eyes, of the sense of touch, or of light. The Académie de Médecine was to arbitrate on any claims that might be made. While the Pigeaire family were staying in Paris they seemed to have given a series of private entertainments at which Léonide's faculties were exhibited, and a large number of persons distinguished in science, literature, and social rank signed records of the successful experiments. When the time came, however, for M. Pigeaire to interview the committee appointed by the Académie de Médecine, he found them perfectly unprepared to investigate and adjudicate upon what actually took place, and only willing to deal with Mlle. Léonide if she would conform precisely to their own arrangements and conditions, among which were that she should wear a peculiar kind of helmet mask which they had constructed, and let one of *their* number keep his hands

on her eyelids all the time. In all its details the story is instructive to any one interested in looking back on the thoroughly unscientific attitude of mind taken up by the representatives of physical science in those days in their dealings with mesmerism. But I can hardly give space here to all the ramifications of the story. M. Pigeaire tried to make his surly inquisitors understand that the whole psychic condition of his daughter required delicate and gentle treatment, that their own proposals were calculated to throw her into convulsions rather than into the clairvoyant state, that the bandages he employed, using masses of cotton wool to cover the eyes completely, were of such a kind that any pretense of distrusting their efficacy was ridiculous, but all to no purpose. The committee refused even to look at his bandages, and after he left them in disgust sent in a report, the general drift of which was that the proposed experiments had been declined except under conditions which the committee did not conceive bore evidence of *bona fides*.

In their zeal to discredit the subject the committee even ventured upon some statements that were positively false, wishing to

lead the reader into the belief that they had interviewed the proposed clairvoyante. But nowhere in 1838 was any scientific body prepared to observe the conditions of fair play or common honesty in dealing with the representatives of mesmerism.

In telling the story, however hastily, one should not omit to mention one concluding incident. A group of those persons who had witnessed the earlier series of preliminary séances with Léonide, took M. Pigeaire's part very warmly. They raised a considerable guarantee fund and publicly offered a prize ten or twelve times greater than that originally offered by the Academy, to any member of that body who should be able to read a single word of print when his eyes had been bandaged on the plan adopted with Mlle. Léonide by her father. It is needless to say nobody took up the challenge, and that the whole incident thus constitutes a very round and complete illustration of the gross dishonesty with which the high authorities in medicine in Paris conducted the war against the new discovery.

A year or two later, in 1845, M. Gautier published a third book called a "Traité pratique du Magnétisme et du Somnambulisme."

This is a well-arranged and well-indexed treatise on magnetism in all the branches then studied, and though very imperfectly divining the real potentialities of psychic mesmerism, is even to this day a solid book of careful record and earnest thinking, immeasurably better worth attention than any of the recent volumes that play up to the fashionable errors of the moment.

M. L. A. Cahagnet seems to have been one of the very few French writers of this period thoroughly alive to the psychic possibilities of clairvoyance. He undertook a prolonged series of mesmeric séances with clairvoyants whose attention he directed to other planes of existence, and these are recorded in a book entitled "Arcanes de la Vie Future Dévoilée." The value of the statements made by his clairvoyants in reference to the future life will of course be variously estimated by different readers, but from the point of view of mesmeric science, the facts concerning the mental phenomena exhibited by the subjects under treatment are of the highest interest. An English translation of this book has been published in America.

Dr. Esdaile's "Mesmerism in India" is a

record of the author's extraordinary success in the application of mesmerism to his surgical practice at the government hospital in Calcutta, of which he was in charge. The book was published about 1842. It includes not only minute surgical reports of frightful operations performed upon the mesmerized patients of the hospital without any suffering or consciousness of what was taking place on their part, but also corroborative testimony from a great many of the most distinguished people resident at Calcutta at the time, who were called in by Dr. Esdaile to be present at these wonderful performances.

A later work by the same author, "Natural and Mesmeric Clairvoyance," published in 1852, includes, besides a quantity of fresh testimony connected with the medical aspects of mesmerism, an epitome of evidence extracted from the "Zoist," and from other sources, on the subject of clairvoyance exhibited during the mesmeric state. In this book Dr. Esdaile also recounts the progress of his own struggle at Calcutta in the effort to press the importance of mesmerism upon the attention of the other doctors of the place, who would only plod along

the beaten path. This narrative is, in some respects, the history of Mesmer's own career over again. Instead of being treated by his professional brethren as a benefactor of humanity, Esdaile was opposed and vilified by all the devices that prejudice and professional jealousy could suggest, and while it was notorious that he was daily performing painless operations on patients under mesmerism, the other doctors continued to torture their own unfortunate victims rather than confess that they had been in error in resisting the use of the new curative agent.

Dr. Esdaile's remarkable works are not the only records of capital operations performed without pain to the patient with the help of mesmerism. A paper read before the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London, in 1842, and published as an independent pamphlet, gives full details concerning a case in which Mr. Ward, a surgeon attached to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, had, about that time, amputated a man's leg above the knee while he, the patient, remained completely unconscious of the operation in a mesmeric sleep, put upon him by the influence of Mr. Topham, a barrister interested in the practice of mesmerism.

The pages of the "Zoist," to which I will refer directly, are laden with reports of other similar cases.

Dr. Scoresby, the Arctic voyager and well-known writer on various branches of maritime science, was a careful experimenter in mesmerism, and a work of his called "Zoistic Magnetism" records a great deal of his work. He had only a limited experience of the higher phenomena, but a very extensive familiarity with the physical phenomena of the mesmeric state, including those on the border-land between the lower and higher, having to do with the transfer of sensation from the mesmerizer to the subject. His book was published in 1849, and is interesting for students of the science for its careful observation in regard to the polarity of different parts of the human body in respect to the emanations of its animal magnetism.

An interesting "Report upon the Phenomena of Clairvoyance or Lucid Somnambulism, from Personal Observation," was published in 1843 by Edwin Lee, Fellow of the Royal Medico-Chirurgical Society, and of many other societies abroad of a similar character. The cases here described

have reference altogether to clairvoyance on the physical plane, that is to say, to the observation by the clairvoyants concerned, of distant places and houses, and also of objects in their own immediate neighborhood, which they had no means of cognizing through the usual senses. Mr. Lee also wrote about the same time a book on "Animal Magnetism," containing a comprehensive review of similar experiments by other observers.

Another work well worth notice is entitled "Facts in Mesmerism, with Reasons for a Dispassionate Inquiry into it," by the Rev. Chauncy Hare Townsend, first published in 1839. This opens with a dedication to Dr. Elliotson, from whose experiments, the author says, the greater part of the English world have derived their ideas of mesmerism. He quotes Dr. Wilson, of the Middlesex Hospital, who having been present at a lecture at Dresden, when several fish in a large tub of water were stunned by an electric shock, tried the effect of mesmerizing the water. The fish revived. The incident suggested the proposal that great use might be made of mesmerized water in medicine. In a preface to his second edition Mr. Town-

send says: "I now cast my mite into the treasury of evidence that is accumulating in favor of mesmerism with a deep regret that prejudice should yet stand in the way of so much alleviation of human suffering as it is calculated to afford." The book consists of a patient record of the author's own experiments, which were largely concerned with interesting phenomena of "sleep waking," as Dr. Elliotson called it, or mesmeric clairvoyance of the simpler kind. Mr. Townsend began with incredulity, but was drawn into serious inquiry in 1836. He worked at this for a long time and with a great number of subjects. His records include a great variety of facts in thought and sensation transference, and in connection with the development, by a mesmerized person, of perceptive faculties in nerve-centres not usually betraying these. He also throws out a good deal of intelligent speculation concerning the media through which mesmeric effects are wrought. Though priding himself on keeping his experiments and investigations on a relatively humble level, and testing the faculties of his subjects by applying them to the commonplace facts of life, Mr. Townsend treats with contempt

"the imagination theory" as "really too absurd to merit a serious refutation. A thousand times I have seen mesmeric patients placed under circumstances where the action of imagination was plainly impossible." And later on he writes: "An elastic ether modified by the nerves, and the conduction of which depends on their condition; which can be thrown into vibration mediately by the mind of man and immediately by the nervous system, which manifests itself when thrown out of equilibrium, and produces mental effects through unusual stimulation of the brain and nerves, cannot but be allowed to be a cause which answers to all the conditions that we desire to unite, and which is sufficient to account for the phenomena that we have been considering."

The "Zoist" was a magazine, published, I believe, under the editorship of Dr. Elliotson, "to collect and diffuse information connected with two sciences — Cerebral Physiology and Mesmerism." "The science of mesmerism," says the inaugural article in the first number, brought out in April, 1843, "is a new physiological truth of incalculable value and importance; and though sneered at by the pseudo-philosophers of the

day, there is not the less certainty that it presents the only avenue through which is discernible a ray of hope that the more intricate phenomena of the nervous system — of life — will ever be revealed to man. Already it has established its claim to be considered a most potent remedy in the cure of disease; already enabled the knife of the operator to traverse and divide the living fibre unfelt by the patient. If such are the results of its infancy, what may not its maturity bring forth?" The thirteen volumes of this magazine, for it was continued up to 1856, constitute a splendid reservoir of information on all branches of mesmeric science. In the farewell address, published with the last issue of the Review, the conductors say their mission has been accomplished. Their object was neither gain nor worldly reputation, but the establishment of truth. For thirteen years they have amassed fresh facts in cerebral physiology and mesmerism, "and presented them in such numbers, and with such proofs, that to question them would be absurd." They speak of the "glorious doings of Dr. Esdaile in India," which the "Zoist" has chronicled, and though mainly dwelling on the achievements of medical

mesmerism, they point to the examples of clairvoyance which abound in their volumes, and which render the phenomenon unquestionable, though of course gross imposition is practiced in regard to it by professional clairvoyants and private persons "influenced by vanity or wickedness."

Only less abundant than the proofs of the reality of mesmeric phenomena with which the pages of the "Zoist" teem, are the illustrations it gives of the senseless and bitter hostility which was opposed to it by the majority of the medical men of its time, and of what Dr. Elliotson, in one letter to the Review early in the proceedings, calls the "anti-mesmeric falsehoods of medical men." The favorite theory of the anti-mesmeric doctors in regard to celebrated surgical operations conducted painlessly under mesmerism, used to be that the sufferers had "feigned" insensibility. That any one could soberly pretend to believe that patients undergoing the frightful torture of first-class surgical operations could subdue all outward signs of suffering in the interests of the new "imposture," shows us the depth of folly to which prejudice and bigotry may sink the understandings of people still capable of exhibit-

ing a form of intelligence in connection with their own commonplace pursuits.

Dr. Elliotson says of his medical confrères at large that they were as brainlessly indifferent to mesmeric phenomena "as the cattle grazing in the meadows are to the wonders of the steam carriages passing by them on the railroads." With sorrow we must recognize that this contemptuous lament is hardly even as yet out of date.

"Isis Revelata, an Inquiry into the Origin, Progress, and Present State of Animal Magnetism," by J. C. Colquhoun, 1836, is a very comprehensive review of the subject, up to the period at which the author wrote. Its publication is justified, in the introduction, on the ground that the report of the French Academy of Sciences, of 1831, had completely superseded the earlier unfavorable report of 1784. It had been supposed, Mr. Colquhoun points out, that animal magnetism was a system of quackery and delusion. "This objection, which might perhaps have had some plausibility during the infancy of the discovery, has now become utterly ludicrous, and betrays either consummate ignorance of the subject or gross dishonesty." Mr. Colquhoun takes a highly

favorable view of Mesmer's life and character, and quotes a dignified letter in which he refuses an offer of a pension of 30,000 francs a year, made to him by the King of France through the Minister Maurepas, on the ground that the offer relates to his pecuniary interest alone, and does not recognize the importance of his discovery as its principal motive. The question ought, Mesmer thinks, to have been approached in a totally opposite way. This, Colquhoun remarks, "is not the language of avarice."

"The Modern Bethesda, or the Gift of Healing restored," is a narrative, or rather a compilation from letters, newspapers, and testimonials of all sorts, relating to the almost innumerable achievements in healing the sick, performed both in America and England by Dr. J. R. Newton. This wonderful mesmerist — a worker of miracles by wholesale — was born in Rhode Island in 1810. The earlier part of his life was spent in a prosperous mercantile career, and his peculiar gifts were not developed till 1858. Then he began to travel about in the United States, visiting thousands of patients, and performing "those marvelous and inexplicable cures which astonish the world and

threaten to revolutionize all former laws and experience of medical science." He had discovered his own powers during a voyage in a crowded passenger steamer, where the yellow fever broke out among thirteen hundred passengers. In Ohio, where he began public ministrations, he treated about one hundred persons a day, performing in the course of time many thousands of wonderful cures.

My purpose in reviewing the books mentioned above has not been to compile anything resembling a complete bibliography of the subject, but simply to show my readers what a wide field the early literature of mesmerism offers for their exploration. But even this rapid survey of its resources would be incomplete without a reference to one which for many modern readers is the standard work on the subject, Dr. Gregory's "Animal Magnetism," first published, I believe, in 1851, and again in other editions at later dates. It is a very fine review of the whole subject in all its branches, and is a good first book for any new student of mesmerism to take up.

The "Mesmerist," a weekly journal of Vital Magnetism, was published in London in 1843. It was begun in May of that

year, and continued till September, when its publication ceased. It abounds in interesting records of mesmeric experience in all branches and in good articles vainly combating the crass indifference and incredulity of the public.

In contrast to this mass of literature, which in reality renders any dispute as to the truth of mesmerism equivalent to a dispute as to whether Columbus was right in believing that a continent exists to the west of the Atlantic Ocean, we may usefully turn for a moment to the conventional, orthodox notices of the subject in those mirrors of popular ignorance concerning all psychic science — the encyclopædias of the day.

The Oxford Encyclopædia, published in 1828, describes animal magnetism as "an appellation given to a pretended science, which during the last century excited considerable attention in several parts of Europe." After giving a caricature account of Mesmer's operations, the writer goes on to declare that in the end it became evident the patients "were impostors, or in a most wretched state of debility both of mind and body." The article concludes by remarking,

"it is needless to add that his doctrine is now almost entirely exploded."

Dr. Rees' "Cyclopædia of Arts, Sciences, and Literature," 1819, disposes of the whole subject in a very charming paragraph. "Animal Magnetism," it says, "is an appellation given by some designing or self-deceived operators upon the credulity and purses of mankind, to certain practices by which, under the pretense of curing diseases, various effects were produced on the animal economy, such as faintings, partial and even general convulsions, etc.;" and referring to the "able investigation" of 1784, which demolished Mesmer's pretensions, the writer concludes by saying that an account of it will be found "under the article Imagination."

Chambers' Encyclopædia, in the edition of 1884, after briefly glancing in a colorless tone at the earlier history of mesmerism, takes refuge in the investigations of Mr. James Braid as settling the character of mesmeric phenomena all round. "Unfortunately," it says, "the evil reputation which the subject had so naturally obtained prevented the due appreciation of Braid's discoveries," — the discovery in question being

really little more than an incomplete and misleading theory concerning a subdivision of mesmeric phenomena, unscientifically separated for the purposes of a preconceived hypothesis, from others incompatible with that hypothesis. The writer in the encyclopædia follows Braid's plan, however, and confines his attention to incidents of mesmeric experience which seem to lend color to the hypnotic theory, lightly remarking of the rest, "no scientific observer has ever confirmed the statements of mesmerists as to clairvoyance, reading of sealed letters, influence on unconscious persons at a distance, or the like;" a statement which might be paralleled if we were to say, "no scientific observer has ever confirmed the statements of travelers and sailors concerning the existence of an American continent with trees, population, lakes, rivers, and the like."

The eighth edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica, in a brief account of Mesmer's life, represents him as a detected impostor, and without one word to indicate that there is even any considerable body of opinion opposed to that view, ignores the report of 1831, and refers to the report of the com-

mittee of 1784 in the following terms: "The proceedings of Deslon, the pupil of Mesmer, were scrutinized by a committee of inquiry, consisting of the physicians Majault, Sallin, d'Arcet, and Guillotin, and the academicians Franklin, Le Roy, Bailly, de Bory, and Lavoisier. The report drawn up by Bailly thoroughly exposed the falsehood and imposture of the mesmeric process. . . . The disciples of animal magnetism attempted to check the advance of their enemies by forming themselves into societies. Mesmer, more politic, escaped amid the general confusion, carrying with him a subscription of 340,000 francs, and at the same time the secret for which that sum had been given to him."

A somewhat different tone is taken up in the recent ninth edition. Mesmer is now spoken of cautiously as a man who made many converts, who was stigmatized as a charlatan, but who was undoubtedly a mystic, and who was honest in the belief that the phenomena produced were real. A timid reference to Reichenbach's discoveries in odyllic force is then put forward. "The idea that some such force exists has been a favorite speculation of scientific men having

a bias towards mysticism, and it makes its appearance not unfrequently." "The next great step in the investigation of these phenomena," the "Britannica" then proceeds, "was made by James Braid, a surgeon, in Manchester, in 1841," — and it goes on to connect the whole remainder of a long article with the weak and insufficient hypothesis of this very shallow thinker.

To comment adequately on the attitude of mind of writers who, remaining thus entirely outside the area of knowledge concerning psychic science in any of its branches, have, nevertheless, the audacity to flirt their incredulity in the faces of wiser and better informed men, would claim the use of stronger language than I care to employ. No one, it is true, deserves blame for leaving any subject that does not attract him altogether unstudied. But in most cases people who are conscious of limited intellectual resources entertain a decent respect for others better furnished. A man may be nothing but a sportsman himself and yet refrain from asserting that chemists and electricians must be impostors. And a chemist may know nothing of Italian art, and yet may refrain from declaring that

Raphael never existed. But all through the commonplace world, whether in its upper or lower strata, people who are ignorant of psychic science encourage one another in the brainless and absurd denial of facts exhibited in the encyclopædias, and in an even more grotesque and impudent fashion by the newspapers of the day, whenever any of its phenomena come up for treatment. The average country grocer, the average newspaper reporter, the average student of physical science, are all steeped in the same dense incapacity to understand the propriety of respecting the knowledge of others, even if they do not share it themselves, whenever they brush up against any statement relating to the work of those who are engaged in any branch of psychic inquiry. From the occult point of view, indeed, one can understand why this should be so. The incredulity of unspiritual mankind is Nature's own protection against those unfit as yet to use her higher gifts. That is all in the legitimate order of things; but the more spiritualized minority need not play up, on their part, to that incredulity. It is their duty to war against it, and in the course of that strife, by slow degrees, the intelligence of the com-

monplace herd will be leavened, and their minds, growing within them in spite of their own complacent unconsciousness of the process, be qualified gradually for a more progressive evolution.

CHAPTER IV.

SIDE-LIGHTS ON MESMERIC PHENOMENA.

ANY one who goes patiently through any considerable body of early mesmeric literature will be struck by the manner in which each writer in turn handles his subject as something expected to rest upon the body of observation, whatever it may be, that he has been enabled to undertake, and without realizing the all-important consideration that when we come to deal with natural phenomena having to do with the subtle forces of vitality, and the even more subtle forces which regulate the phenomena of consciousness in higher states of nature, we cannot make sense of any observations without being in a position to comprehend something of the general natural design of which they form a part. The stars were seen in the sky long before astronomers were fortified with the mathematical and other knowledge that enabled them to design a working hypothesis of the universe sufficiently approximative to

the truth to render intelligent observation possible; but until that time people who merely looked at the heavenly bodies moving about in the sky, and theorized on the basis of such observations alone made a terrible hash of their conjectures as to what was going on. Similar remarks may broadly be made about every science in turn. Early chemistry was a mere blind groping in the dark amongst phenomena which could undergo no coördination until some considerable advance had been made in comprehending the elementary structure of all bodies, and the leading principles of chemical combination. Not of course until the molecular constitution of matter was realized did chemistry begin to assume anything like the dignity of a fully matured science. Now the observation of the facts of mesmerism is exactly analogous to the observation of stars carried on from the point of view of an astronomer knowing nothing of gravitation or of the relations between the planets and the sun.

The mere facts are interesting, as the mere sight of the heavens must have been impressive even to the most uninstructed star-gazer; but the facts themselves, however carefully codified, will never enable students

to assign them to their proper realms of nature, or indeed to develop anything like a rational theory of their causation. The only scientific method by which they can be examined must have to do with some preliminary theory of psychic science, corresponding, for example, to the theory of molecular matter to which the influence of previously observed facts in chemistry can be applied.

But truly to the world at large up till a very recent date there has been no theory of spiritual science available, even as something to be checked by the observed facts of mesmeric experience; and of course even now the great bulk of the cultured community is neglectful of the important acquisitions in this respect which have lately been made and offered for the service of all who care to make use of them, in some measure through my own instrumentality. With the full exposition and vindication of that teaching I am not at present, as far as this volume is concerned, desirous of occupying my readers; but I am in this dilemma, that while believing I can bring into an orderly and coherent science the hitherto disorderly and apparently chaotic facts of mesmeric observation, I can only do this by constant refer-

ence to the body of spiritual teaching set forth in modern theosophical literature. Mesmerism can be explained by what is called the esoteric doctrine, and certainly in no other way, but a belief in mesmerism or at least in some few of the facts that mesmerism is concerned with has been recently diffused to an enormous extent amongst myriads of people who have never heard of the esoteric doctrine. These people cannot as yet realize why it must remain impossible for them to understand mesmerism without going behind it in search of mysteries about which they are wholly uninformed; and yet it is absolutely impossible by any simple straightforward attack upon the problems that mesmerism presents to us to bring them into harmony with the workings of natural law, or, in other words, to make sense of them.

Reflection on the character of the problems to be dealt with ought, however, to convince even those who know nothing of occultism as a science, that there must be such a science, or the potentialities of such a science, lurking somewhere in the background. Straightforward investigation of mesmeric phenomena shows us at all events

the magnetic fluid proceeding from the operator, and bringing about results — how, no one can guess. But though susceptible of being seen by some people, the magnetic fluid itself is imperceptible to most eyes among those that may look for it, and clearly belongs to a different order of natural phenomena from those that are entirely subject to sense perception. What ought to be the effect of such an extremely impalpable agency when it touches the organism against which it is directed? If it is capable of producing any effect upon that organism at all it must be through some attributes inherent therein which are of its own nature. The psychic force, in point of fact, thrown out by the will or thought of the operator, has got to influence the will or thought of the subject first, and then to get at the body, if that is the object in view, through the corresponding principles of the sensitive's organization. Everything that has to do, therefore, with the non-physical planes of Nature comes within the purview of those who would arm themselves for the purpose of comprehending mesmerism in a scientific spirit.

This consideration is one of the most important that can be presented to the general

reader in connection with the current revival of mesmerism. The idea is simple; I have expressed it already. Mesmeric phenomena are either wholly or partially psychic in their nature. We cannot understand them unless it is possible to investigate the realm of nature in which the laws governing our psychic consciousness are really operative. Any theorizing concerning external facts in mesmerism which aims at accounting for these by the materialistic science of old-fashioned medical practice, must necessarily be doomed to failure. But I must be pardoned for dwelling a little more on the idea, because until people recognize and act upon it, there cannot be any such general progress in connection with spiritual knowledge and achievement as a truly intelligent appreciation of mesmerism might bring in its train. Look at the way in which even the sciences of the physical plane rest now upon one another as their higher mysteries are explored. Chemistry and electricity at one time seemed lines of inquiry standing quite apart. Now, of course, they are so intimately blended, that electricity is as much a reagent of chemistry, in its relations with that science, as hydrochloric acid. This is the case even al-

though the laws of matter to be investigated are laws of matter alone. But when we take a living human being and endeavor to investigate *him*, it is not enough to be acquainted with the organism that expresses his consciousness. However deeply the materialistic physiologist may penetrate the intricacies of this organism, he will always be brought up abruptly on the threshold of consciousness, and will frankly recognize that farther than this it is impossible for him to go. Too often indeed he is inclined to put the idea in words that imply too much, and he may say it is impossible for *any one* else to go beyond the barrier he finds so impassable. That is just the mistake he makes, and there is more pompous conceit than real modesty in the commonplace phrases by which people are in the habit of proclaiming the orthodox boundaries of their knowledge. "No one knows, no one can ever know, anything of the mysteries lying on the other side of death." So commonplace writers will frequently affirm with absurd confidence in the certainty of their own universal negative. This attitude of mind is what has to be broken down on the part of modern European thinkers generally, before the lines

of study can be taken up which will really conduce to the comprehension even of so midway a series of phenomena as those of mesmerism. When people say as above, "No one knows, no one ever can know," etc., they are simply making a false statement which vast bodies of experience contradict every day.

In one sense, up till now, most people could afford to keep their eyes shut to the superphysical realms of nature. The work of their progress was strictly associated with the exploration of physical nature. That has been the function of this expiring century in a preëminent degree; and the century could perform its work, so to speak, without knowing anything about the spiritual planes, but that will no longer be the case with the next century. Here we are already face to face with this complicated question as to what mesmerism really is; we are confronted by a mass of ill-understood phenomena. But ill-understood though they may be, they are now at all events so completely recognized that future generations will infallibly be concerned with them to a considerable degree; investigating them intelligently or clumsily, pushing them to

beneficial or mischievous developments; but every one will be hopelessly entangled with them unless dealing with them as partly belonging to the spiritual planes. The living man with his interior consciousness of self and individuality is on two planes of nature at once, as a ship is in two media at once, half in the water and half in the air. To manage your ship successfully you must take cognizance of the laws governing each of those media. To deal successfully with your human being you must understand his physiology no doubt, but you must equally understand his psychology, and something of the collateral phenomena of nature in those regions or planes thereof, to which the phenomena of the psychic man belong.

So now, though feeling by reason of the double illumination which occult study has provided for, fairly qualified to explain many of the phenomena of mesmerism which have hitherto been left the prey of mere unintelligent wonder, I am at the same time constrained to say that no one can hope to make head or tail of any really true and scientific *rationale* of mesmerism unless he will first take the trouble to comprehend occult teaching, up, at all events, to a certain

point. We must realize something of what occultists mean by the astral plane before entering on the consideration of how the consciousness of a mesmerized object behaves when translated to that plane. But, on the other hand, this book cannot be a treatise on occult science at large. That should be dealt with and investigated as an independent study by any one who aims at a really thorough grasp of its principles. What I have to do therefore for the moment is to make a statement concerning the esoteric teaching which gears in with the facts of mesmeric science, asking the reader to treat this for the time being as simply a working hypothesis. If as a working hypothesis it be found that all the facts of mesmerism are thus provided with a rational setting, that perhaps may be regarded as a provisional consideration in favor of the esoteric teaching, and may perhaps impel students to inquire into it a little further. But of course I will not delay my readers on the threshold of the subject with which I am now specially concerned, in order to set forth, in the explanations it may here be necessary to give, anything resembling a complete argument on behalf of the occult theories concerning life and the higher aspects of nature.

The esoteric or occult science view of man's constitution is the important branch of the subject to be put here in the foreground. This is represented as consisting of several principles, and the classification is at all events far more scientific in its character than that which sums up the human being as consisting of a body and a soul. We need not quarrel with the body and soul division as far as it goes, but it does not go far, and, above all, sins against accuracy in overlooking the manner in which the lower principles of man merge gradually into the higher through some of an intermediate character. It is with these intermediate principles that mesmerism has especially to do, and it is with a view of getting the reader to understand the classification at all events, even if he does not at the moment accept it, that I wish now to describe what is called the septenary division of man.

We have got clearly to deal first of all with the matter constituting his body, matter which is analyzable into its organic elements, its carbon, phosphorus, oxygen, and other gases. By chemical processes of nature, carried on first of all in the vegetable world, the inorganic matter of which the

man's body is composed has somehow been converted into organic matter before it actually takes part in the complete structure of his bones and flesh. This life principle, which differentiates organic from inorganic matter, is the second principle of man, and may for the moment be called vital force. But thus far we are thinking merely of material atoms, vitalized, it is true, but under no direction which impels them to assume the form of a human body. People content with a merely conventional knowledge of nature trouble themselves little as to how or why the atoms group themselves as they do during the growth of a human being. Occult science, more penetrating in its vision, discerns an underlying pattern, so to speak, consisting of materials wholly unlike those of the physical plane, and belonging indeed to what by the conventionalities of occultism is called the astral plane; and this pattern, or ground-plan, of the human being is recognized as the third principle, and may be called the astral body. It is quite visible when detached from the physical body to those who are gifted in any high degree with clairvoyant vision.

The fourth and fifth principles of man to-

gether constitute what may be held to correspond with the ordinary idea of the soul, but occultism thinks of the soul as complex in its constitution. As every one can see, it has affinities for earthly and material sensations, pleasures and pursuits, while at the same time it is also gifted with sympathies in a far loftier direction. That these very different aspects of the soul are seated during the life of the complete individual in different vehicles — to use an oriental metaphor — is one of the fundamental conceptions of the septenary division, and the lower of these two vehicles, the fourth principle of man, is most conveniently described by the term "animal soul," while the fifth is the truly "human soul," itself more or less pervaded by the sixth, or "spiritual soul," which, though existing undeniably in germ in every human being, is, for a great many of us unfortunately, a potentiality rather than an accomplished fact. The seventh principle on the occult scale is that infinite, sublime, incomprehensible universal Spirit in which all the phenomena of nature are in some wholly unfathomable way involved; out of whose infinite potentiality all manifestation arises, in which, whatever they may be, there re-

side the attributes that human speculation, vaguely groping after the unattainable, assigns to divinity.

Fine and elaborate as this division will appear as contrasted with the more elementary conception of the soul and the body, it is not by any means complicated enough to account for all the phenomena which have to do with either of these principles taken by itself. I do not conceive, for example, that the matter would be correctly put if I simply said "that which we may call the mesmeric fluid *is* the vital energy," or second principle on the classification just described. But certainly it has very close relations with that force, and one of the correct interpretations of mesmeric phenomena in the humbler levels of these would recognize animal magnetism as equal to the task of restoring lost vital energy, and thus accomplishing beneficial effects on the human system where no specific illness has to be considered, and where nothing but a healthy stimulus is wanted to reëstablish vigor.

The close relations between animal magnetism and vital energy may be observed in very interesting experiments which have sometimes been carried out, though rarely

by European mesmerists, in connection with the vegetable kingdom. It is possible to mesmerize a plant, and procure specific and distinct results in connection with the direct stimulation of its growth. That these results have sometimes been pushed to what seemed at a first glance quite miraculous lengths by some oriental adepts in mesmeric science, is, I believe, a fact, although unfortunately the existence of such a possibility in the background, as it were, of nature's resources is but too often made the excuse in India for juggling of a most commonplace type, which pretends to reproduce the vaguely talked of feats of the great occultists, just as amongst ourselves commonplace conjurors derive from rumored wonders connected with spiritualism suggestions for their own illusions.

The various principles of man that I have been describing make up the complete man in the aggregate, just as, to use a rough illustration, the sails as well as the keel of a ship contribute to make up the complete vessel. But the sails belong in their nature and are adapted to one medium with which the vessel is concerned, the air; the keel is adapted to the other. Any one observing the keel from

the point of view of the medium to which it belongs, if himself a fish and unqualified to take note of natural phenomena above the surface of his own element, would not be able to account always for its behavior. What, for instance, could explain to him the reason why the keel might sometimes be slewed very much to one side as the vessel lay over to the wind? The observer of the kind I have imagined would be related to such a phenomenon just as the mere physical scientist amongst ourselves is related to phenomena which have to do with the human consciousness.

I rather cling to this illustration of the vessel belonging to two media, because it will help to show, in reference to the principles of man, that although the higher and the lower principles during life are closely intermingled with each other, the higher nevertheless belong by their nature to other planes than that with which our eyes and senses make us familiar. Take, for example, the astral principles of a man's body and lower soul. All the time that the body is in the physical plane (if one may use that expression) these astral principles are in the astral plane of nature, coextensive with the

physical, permeating it everywhere, constituting its second aspect, and, above all things, filled with the phenomena properly appertaining to it, just as the physical plane is filled with the scenery and decorations of nature, with the animal and vegetable kingdoms as well as with the humanity which presides over all. And this is the second great idea amongst those taught by occult science which I want my readers to keep hold of, at all events as a working hypothesis, — namely, that the planes of nature of which I speak as higher or superior to those which we see around us, are all abundantly stocked with the beings, things, objects of creation, whatever we may call them, which properly belong to their nature, while to a consciousness which becomes translated to any one of these planes such scenery or inhabitants will be as fully perceptible as the scenery and inhabitants of the earth are perceptible to waking vision. These planes of nature do not divide themselves in precise accordance with the septenary division of human principles of which I just spoke, but for the purposes of what we are now considering we must realize two great phases of nature, or planes, above that of the visible

earth, the nearest to us being the astral, the next what I will here call the spiritual plane. It is towards this latter that the soul of a human being should ultimately aspire, but it is quite certain that with every human being who is first released from the imprisonment of the flesh, whether by the solemn process of nature at death, or by the intervention of mesmeric influences during life, it is quite certain, I say, that the astral plane will be the first on which that consciousness reopens after quitting the physical. The further progress upwards, indeed, is one claiming so much from the soul that aims at it, that a great number of very good mesmeric sensitives may not be enabled to accomplish it. The astral plane thus becomes much the most important for the purposes of studying commonplace mesmeric phenomena.

When I come to deal with clairvoyance it will be necessary to recur to this exposition as bearing closely on the magnetic trance; but as regards the simpler phenomena of mesmerism, in so far as it affects the health of the body generally, it is only necessary to realize the astral plane sufficiently to comprehend that there we find the bridge of com-

munication between the senses of the operator and the subject, and that all the bewildering experiences connected with sensitives who taste what some one else tastes under mesmerism, and feel the pins which prick other people's bodies, cease to present an incomprehensible or miraculous aspect when we realize the manner in which the astral plane affords direct communion between the consciousness of the operator and the subject when the two are brought into true magnetic harmony.

In regard to the spiritual plane, that has to do solely with the higher spiritual phases of consciousness which mesmerism can evoke from a sensitive, and need not be thought of except in connection with the most exalted sort of clairvoyance; so that practically for a rough comprehension of the *rationale* of mesmerism all I am asking for the moment is that my readers should recognize, or at all events assume for the purposes of this argument, the existence of what has here been called the astral plane, the medium of nature in which the human will operates more directly on sensation than in the medium of existence which is constituted by the physical earth.

CHAPTER V.

CURATIVE MESMERISM.

A CURIOUS tendency of the human mind leads a great many people to suppose that any given branch of knowledge has assumed importance for the first time when it happens first to have arrested their own attention. Few people would confess this to be the truth as regards themselves in a naked way, but the whole body of modern literature put forth under the hypnotic flag is a ludicrous illustration that with society at large that rule operates. The names with which "scientific" hypnotism are most definitely associated in modern years are those of Dr. Charcot and Dr. Liebault. But at the same time it is a simple historical fact that far more was done to establish the scientific truth of curative mesmerism by Dr. Esdaile and Dr. Elliotson fifty years ago, than either of the modern physicians just named have had time yet to accomplish.

For inquirers who at this stage of the pro-

ceedings wish to know what curative mesmerism really can accomplish, Dr. Esdaile's books and the "Zoist" remain immeasurably the most fruitful literature to take up. The only aspect in which, at the same time, they are at all defective is that which has to do with theory. Falling into a very natural error, most of the early experimentalists who obtained striking and important results came to the conclusion that these would be capable of attainment by anybody else who tried for them in the same way, and with any subjects on whom they might operate. They knew they had failures in some cases, but they probably did not know the extent to which they were abnormally gifted with the peculiar reserves of nervous energy required to throw off animal magnetism, and one of them, as we have seen especially, Baron du Potet, is almost ludicrously frightened lest the world at large should immediately rush forward to repeat his own experiments, the bearings of which in some cases he saw, not unreasonably, to be fraught with peril. He failed to attach sufficient importance to the Bœotian lethargy of his generation at large; and we have not yet by any means passed beyond that stage of human enlightenment

in which we may still rely with a good deal of confidence on the stupidity of our contemporaries as a safeguard against their premature invasion of occult mysteries.

But at all events, to go back to Esdaile and Elliotson, these two great experimentalists have left volumes of results which it is not my business here to reproduce, but on which I will venture to make some comments, inasmuch as they have made either little effort, or obtained but little success in their attempts, to account for their own achievements. It is enough for the moment as regards the facts to say that both Esdaile in Calcutta, and Elliotson in the North of London, cured serious diseases of almost every sort and kind by treatment which involved the use of animal magnetism, and of no other curative agent whatever. A common and absurd allegation put forward by people who preserve their opinions concerning the curative effects of magnetism, by carefully protecting their ignorance of all the facts from the invasion of external knowledge, is to the effect that mesmeric influence is only beneficial, when beneficial at all, in cases of nervous disorder. They might as well say that a locomotive engine could only pull a car-

riage made of mahogany, and not one constructed of any other wood. The statement is simply untrue, and incompatible with all experience on the subject, as also it is entirely out of touch with the theory as to the causation at work which we are now in a position to frame.

The records of Esdaile's and Elliotson's work will also show numerous cases in which operations of the most excruciating order and on the largest scale — operations like the amputation of a leg, or the removal of some internal tumor — have been performed on patients rendered entirely insensible to pain by purely magnetic treatment. But we may make a clear distinction between the anæsthetic effects of mesmerism and the curative effects, and in the first instance I propose to deal with the latter.

The first remark one has to make about Esdaile's work to begin with is that the conditions which surrounded him were extraordinarily favorable. The hospital in which he worked was at Calcutta, and the patients almost entirely natives of India. As a race natives of India are very much more sensitive to magnetic influence than Europeans. This question of sensitiveness is one which

requires a great deal of explanation, but may be dealt with more conveniently when we come to consider the psychic rather than the medical department of the subject. Elliotson, it is true, worked entirely with European patients, but never, as far as records show, obtained such startling results as those of Calcutta if measured by the proportion of sensitiveness discovered. Specific results in North London were just as good in some cases as specific results in India; but no intelligent mesmerist setting to work in this country would expect for a moment to be able to influence as many per cent. of the people he might deal with as if he were working in the midst of an oriental community. Now, this difficulty about the non-sensitiveness to mesmeric treatment of a very great number of people all over the world, and of an especially great number in the highly civilized communities of modern Europe, is one which no enthusiast for mesmeric progress should blink in any way, or attempt to underestimate. But, on the other hand, we must remember that the highly insensitive condition of Europeans, which may interfere for the moment with the practical value of magnetic cures, is itself a mental

rather than a physical phenomenon. It is due to the prevalent attitude of mind which highly educated and highly civilized Europeans generally fall into, and it would undergo a very great change if the scientific nature of mesmeric facts became generally understood and relieved, by the sanction of high intellectual authority, from the torrent of ribaldry with which the whole subject has been so long inundated by ephemeral writers playing up, as usual, to the greatest ignorance of the greatest number. All that we have really to keep in mind is that mesmeric influence is not a curative agent which is universally applicable; it is a curative agent which is probably more influential than any other system medical science has discovered, and is certainly susceptible of enormous and most advantageous extension.

But how does the system work? Let us see what have been the conclusions as regards their own part in the cures they have worked, of the earliest exponents of mesmerism who still remain the most remarkable of its experimentalists. Esdaile seems never to have got much beyond the perception of the fact that he could by making passes, associated with the exercise of his own will,

produce magnetic trances, out of which, when it was his will that this result should ensue, his patients would emerge either cured or very greatly relieved. I doubt if Dr. Elliotson developed any theory going much beyond this, and indeed, if any mesmeric books, old or new, embody any theoretical explanations of such phenomena that are worth the serious attention of students, I know of none such.

Perhaps this assertion should be qualified by some reference to what is called hypnotic suggestion as a curative method, for here we are certainly in close touch with a theory, or if not exactly with a theory as to the inner working of the remedy, with a theory which advances us one step in that direction. The exponents of hypnotic suggestion imagine that they dispense in the first instance altogether with any emanations; that they bring about a condition of partial or complete unconsciousness by inducing their patients to adopt some auto-mesmeric process, and that while in this state they throw into their minds, simply by spoken assurance on the subject, the idea that when they recover their normal state they will find themselves better. I am very far from wishing to im-

ply that this kind of suggestion is never really effectual, but I suspect that in most cases where it works well the operator who directs the whole undertaking has really been very much more energetic in the matter than he has supposed. After all, magnetic passes are merely some among the methods by means of which animal magnetism can be projected. One of the most potent modern mesmerizers whom I have encountered, a person in no way associated with any publicly known undertakings of this kind, has never employed passes, but has obtained entire control of his sensitives by looking at them fixedly, and exerting that mysterious force which we call the will, without any physical manipulation. It would be difficult for a doctor instructing a patient, and still more difficult if he superintends that patient, in the methods required to superinduce the hypnotic condition, to avoid contributing very largely to the result himself.

However this may be, operators of the latest school are quite on the wrong track in devoting themselves to the method of hypnotic suggestion. The leading fact of mesmeric science which justifies this last remark is that to which I have already referred —

the actual objective existence as a fact in nature, as unequivocal as the steam in a boiler, of the mesmeric fluid. Until people who are on the path of this inquiry convince themselves of this, they will be stumbling about in the dark. It is the first all-important leading elementary principle of the subject, and any one who attempts to dispute it takes up a position which is first of all absurd to those who, as I said before, are in a position to *see* the fluid in question — as certainly, though a much finer phenomenon is concerned, as an engineer can see the steam pouring out from his exhaust-tubes. Secondly, the denial of the fluid theory is irrational in face of Reichenbach's researches, and can only be maintained by virtue of a preliminary declaration that these researches are falsely recorded. If it is argued that Reichenbach is yet almost alone as an explorer in that particular range of phenomena, the answer is that a positive fact, if a fact, is still a fact in nature, though it stand alone; and nobody after its establishment is entitled to construct a theory of nature with which it is incompatible.

Now this being assumed as the fundamental state of our knowledge as to the way in

which magnetic cures work, let us go a step further in the direction of what I am quite ready to treat for the present as a hypothesis. It is not unreasonable to assume that the magnetic fluid which emanates from a powerful mesmeric operator is something which, in varying degrees, is present in the organism of all other human beings. Nor is it unreasonable to suppose that a something which is clearly allied in a very important manner with the innermost vital functions of the organism may be in some way or other unhealthy when those vital functions are manifestly out of order. Now, if that be the case, the object we have to accomplish in effecting a magnetic cure is to withdraw the unhealthy fluid which has accumulated in the organism of the sufferer in the first instance, and replace it with that of a more healthy order from a vigorous and wholesome constitution. And clearly when we want to replace one thing by another it is possible to do this in two ways; one a rough way, and the other a neat and relatively scientific method. We may simply force in the new influence, trusting that it will by its own abundance somehow expel and drive off that of which we want to get rid, or we may, by

an arrangement of our energies far more economical as regards the expenditure of force, get rid first of the evil entity, whatever it is, fluid substance or magnetism, and then replace it by as much as may be required to fill the void, of a more wholesome order.

So far, it seems to me, the most successful among well-known curative mesmerists have blundered on the rougher of these two expedients. Without apparently stopping to think the thing out, and certainly without coming to the conclusion that the underlying cause of illness must be an illness, so to speak, in the sufferer's own personal magnetism, they have simply drenched him with the emanations of their own healthier organism, and have obtained, no doubt, from this somewhat extravagant process, results which were often highly satisfactory. An immeasurably more scientific way of going to work, however, is to withdraw first of all the unhealthy, or to use a convenient expression, the bad magnetism, and then replace it by an entirely separate operation. How is this to be done? some one may ask; and the answer is, by a very much simpler method than the apparent obscurity of the subject would seem to foreshadow.

Whether people understand what they are doing or not, if they try to mesmerize, and hold out their hands with that end in view, making passes or simply pointing the fingers, as they may choose, what they are really doing is this: they propel the magnetic fluid accumulated in their own system in the direction they choose that it shall go — that choice being really little more than emphasized in their minds by the fact that they are perhaps pointing in the same direction — by means of an exercise of will-power, which, great or little in its intensity, is the outcome of their wish to obtain success. The magnetic fluid does not simply flow from the fingers because they are extended in one direction or another. Nothing whatever will pass without the hidden influence of the will-force in the background, any more than a bullet will pass out of a gun without the expansion of the gases in the rear.

Now, that being so as regards the emission of mesmeric fluid, how are you to reverse the process and draw from a patient the bad magnetism of which you want to free him? By nothing more elaborate than the exercise of the will to that end, associated with precisely the same mechanical method of em-

phasizing your own will that would be employed in the other case. The fingers of a mesmerist pointed to the forehead of a patient may be made to suck in or draw out from the patient a current of magnetism, just as with the other intention the same condition of things would be seen by a person whose sight was properly developed to involve the emission of a current. For all such purposes, indeed, as the withdrawal of bad magnetism, something more than the mere contiguity of the operator's fingers is desirable. The complete touch of the whole hand is a mechanical arrangement lending far more assistance to the will-power than any other arrangement; and it will be seen that in having arrived at this conclusion along the path of purely scientific speculation we have got back to the famous old biblical method, — the laying on of hands. The hands laid on may be thought of in the operator's mind with a view of intensifying their influence to the utmost, as sponges applied to a wet surface with a view of sopping up the moisture; that is to say, he will think of them with reference to the bad magnetism he wishes them to withdraw, in a way which is precisely analogous to the illustration just given.

But what is he to do with the bad magnetism when he has sopped it up in his hands? And here at the very outset of the matter we come to an extremely important consideration which is constantly overlooked by the earlier writers on mesmerism. You must get rid of the bad magnetism in some definitely final and specific way if you want to accomplish any permanent cure of the patient, for one very good reason; because, if you do not, it is more than likely that the evil of which you have relieved him will lodge in your own system, and unless it happens that the store of magnetic energy in your own system is so extraordinarily abundant that it drives out the intruding evil, you will set up in your own physical conditions of health something very like the disorder you have cured. On a small scale it is worth while to acquire for one's self a mild disorder to bring this truth home to the mind. I have repeatedly given myself headaches by taking them away from others, leaving out by deliberate intention, or perhaps in some cases by carelessness, the precautions which I knew ought to be taken to guard against that result.

How, then, to get rid of bad magnetism from hands which are laden with it; that is

the problem with which we have now to deal. Again, for all practical purposes the result is obtained by a simple effort of will in that direction, associated with gestures which stimulate the intention. If the hands are withdrawn from the patient, and the gesture is made in a free direction of throwing off whatever they may contain, exactly as if they were wet and the operator were trying to dry them by flourishing them about in the air, the desired end is reached under most of the simple conditions which ordinary mesmerism would be concerned with. To make the matter theoretically clearer, however, we must dive a little more deeply into the mysteries of the superphysical regions of nature lying all around us. Of these I shall have to speak a good deal more when dealing with the higher spiritual aspects of mesmerism, but up to the present time it has not been necessary to touch that side of the subject. The ordinary curative influences can be worked without reference to the higher planes of nature, just because they are concerned with the phenomena of the lower plane — with mere physical illness. But now in some degree the refinement with which we are dealing does impinge on the higher branch of the subject.

A well-known and even hackneyed expression describes dirt as "matter in the wrong place," and involves, perhaps, a deeper philosophy than Lord Palmerston, who was, I believe, its real author, troubled his head with at the time. Hardly any matter is absolutely evil, and in its right place may fall into the general scheme of natural processes. So with what, for convenience' sake, I have called bad magnetism. That may be very bad indeed when concentrated in a human organism, but may not necessarily be wholly without suitable affinities in the vast field of nature's operations. There are, according to the teachings of occult science, entities in nature on the superphysical plane in which such bad magnetism would find its own sphere, I will not say absolutely of utility, because that would be begging a very complicated question, but at all events its own appropriate sphere. A very prolonged dissertation on the subject would be required to elucidate, as far as that might be possible for us, the real nature of the elemental entities to which I refer, but at all events it is to that destination the bad magnetism withdrawn from a subject in illness has to be sent if the operator wishes to get rid of it

entirely, as of course he does. The mere gesture of throwing it off from himself with the intention of getting rid of it will, in all probability, throw it into what may be called the sphere of attraction of those currents, forces, or entities — whatever we like to call them — which will carry it away from all further relations with ourselves. But, of course, if the operator is gifted with sufficient astral sight or clairvoyance himself as to see the process carried out, he will be very much more successful in getting rid of the evil.

And for those who realize the process I have just described, a new interest may attach to many biblical phrases in which it is distinctly referred to for those who comprehend the symbology, and shown to be present to the knowledge of those earlier occultists who practiced mesmerism many thousand years before Mesmer. For example, the very well-known parable of the herd of swine, in regard to which so much egregious nonsense has been written both by those who endeavor to represent it as a literal historical transaction, and by those who conceive that the authenticity of the biblical narrative is upset by dwelling on the immoral absurd-

ity of the story taken literally, is significant for those who understand the affinities between certain orders of elemental currents, and what we are here talking of as bad magnetism. The herd of swine simply stand as a symbol for these elemental currents or entities, and the meaning is that when the devil cast out of the man who was afflicted — or, in our more scientific phraseology, when the bad magnetism withdrawn from him — had to be disposed of by the supreme operator concerned, it was disposed of in the proper way, and not left to hang about the aura [1] of either himself or the bystanders.

[1] It is impossible to explain the real theory of mesmerism without using some words very familiar to students of occultism in other branches, but perhaps requiring a brief explanation here. The "aura" is the term employed to denote that cloud of astral matter, that is to say, of matter belonging to the next plane of nature above the physical plane, which surrounds every human being, and by a large number of adequately gifted people can be seen by a finer development of that faculty already referred to as enabling some people to see the mesmeric fluid, or, as it would sometimes be called by occultists, the magnetic aura. The condition of the aura has almost an unlimited signification for those who are properly instructed in the interpretation of its signs, but without going into those of its aspects which have no direct concern with my present subject, it is enough to say that the aura in every case would be violently affected by conditions of disease, and while the restora-

When such bad magnetism is left to hang about the aura of the operator it may, as already suggested, develop in himself the very ailment from which he has cured his subject, if his own physical constitution present any weakness in that direction. Or, if this does not take place, another very curious result may follow, which is illustrated by an occurrence within my own knowledge. A lady, troubled with very long-seated and severe rheumatism, was cured by a mesmeric operator in Paris, and went away well satisfied to another part of Europe. Four years afterwards the old pain, which had never troubled her in the interval, returned with its old virulence, and she hastily sent to inquire after the operator who had dealt with her so successfully. It turned out that he had died at exactly the period when her complaint returned. Other similar cases are spoken of in some of the mesmeric books, and the explanation simply is that in such cases the operator has never got rid of the

tion, in a person who had been ill, of healthy conditions would manifest itself in the purification of the aura, it is equally a converse possibility that influences of a relatively immaterial character in the first instance affecting the aura, might afterwards express themselves in physical conditions.

bad magnetism. It has never found a lodgment in his own system, because that has been too healthy to allow of its ingress, but when all the attractive forces of his own life are broken up at its close, the bad magnetism, released from its temporary entanglement, flies back to its own previous habitat, like any electric current following the channel of least resistance.

At the present moment the most energetic of modern physicians amongst ourselves in England who are endeavoring to apply some of the lessons of mesmerism to the cure of disease, have drifted into the practice of what is very well known now as "hypnotic suggestion;" and I am very far from wishing to imply that that system is inoperative or delusive. Within the system of every human being there are springs of force which can be called into activity by hypnotic suggestion, even to the expulsion of bad magnetism, and the apparent production of a cure. I say apparent, because under this arrangement no very great likelihood that the bad magnetism will be finally expelled from the patient's aura is set up. Moreover, this complicated reflection has to be taken into account, one which all modern

followers of the hypnotic school have entirely overlooked in dwelling on the existence of another danger to which they assign perhaps exaggerated importance. It is a commonplace of modern writing on the subject that purely hypnotic treatment, that is to say, the establishment of conditions of what we call the mesmeric order in a patient's system by means of external mechanical applications, like revolving mirrors, or what not, is free from the peril attached to the influence which a mesmerist obtains over his subject if similar conditions are established by means of passes in the old way. Now, of course, it is perfectly true that to a certain extent the mesmeric operator obtains influence over his subject, and if the same operator and the same subject go on working together for a long period of time, and trance conditions are constantly reëstablished, the influence of the mesmerist becomes enormous. That influence, however, does not spring into sudden magnitude all at once on a single occasion. Here again qualifications have to be introduced which I will discuss in their proper place in regard to the sudden results obtained with entire strangers by professional mesmeric exhibitors; but these

really fall into a different category from the cases with which we are concerned for the moment. It is most emphatically true that no mesmerist influencing a subject for a curative purpose would suddenly acquire fatal supremacy over the *morale* of that subject; but from the point of view which I fully recognize — that after a time when the influences had been frequently repeated such control would be possible — the reply is that people who find the need of being mesmerized must be exceedingly careful into whose hands they trust themselves.

I think if the idea of medical science of the ordinary type were presented to the world now for the first time, timid people would be inclined to say, "How frightful the notion of following the prescriptions of a doctor. If he were malevolently inclined he might give us poison or drugs which would be otherwise deleterious!" Of course he might. In this life we are continually relying with more or less confidence on our fellow-beings. Sometimes that confidence is misplaced, and terrible examples of trust betrayed in every walk of life encounter our observation; but as life is organized at present we can only meet that condition of things

by taking care as to whom we do trust, whether in affairs of every-day life, in business, in affection, in medical practice, or, finally, in mesmerism. As for the notion that when a mesmerized subject may pass under the curious invisible influence of the operator, he or she on that account loses the normal faculty of will, and is weakened or degraded in character accordingly, I venture to declare that no shadow of justification for that theory can be set up by any legitimate appeal to established facts in the psychic constitution of man. It is not even true that sensitiveness to mesmeric influence is necessarily associated, although that sometimes may be the case, with want of individual energy of character. To that branch of the subject, however, I must recur later, and therefore leave it alone for the present. But coming back now to the real danger, such as it is, of hypnotic suggestion, as distinguished from the other danger, such as it is, of mesmeric treatment, we must remember that the hypnotic state may very roughly be described as an abnormal physical condition, and the mesmeric state as an abnormal astral[1] condition. In some way the nerves are

[1] This term is of universal application in all occult writing to that region of nature related to such phenom-

jarred by the peculiar strain imparted to them in the first instance through the optic nerve, and a mysterious dislocation of the interior mechanism of the nerve system is superinduced; and this dislocation once superinduced is very liable to recur under the stimulus of some casual accident or thoughtless act on the part of any person who has once acquired the unfortunate art of throwing his nervous system into disorder. Like many other dangers that we have to recognize as theoretically possible in all varieties of mesmeric treatment, I am not arguing that this one is of very great magnitude, but as far as it goes it is a real risk, and the tendency, therefore, of hypnotic treatment is distinctly more injurious than the tendency of mesmeric treatment, always assuming that we do not fall into the improbable disaster of putting ourselves too trustfully into the hands of a consciously malevolent person.

ena as the aura I have already described. It is a realm in itself, of vast complexity, co-extensive with, and quite as populous as the physical plane, and filled with as great a variety of natural phenomena. *Vide* books on occultism generally; in reference to which I cannot refrain from adding that people who put them all aside as unworthy of consideration will never make anything but nonsense of their theories concerning either mesmeric or hypnotic transactions.

CHAPTER VI.

ANÆSTHETIC EFFECTS AND RIGIDITY.

Rich as the old literature of mesmerism is in evidence concerning the anæsthetic effects of magnetism, and though in the experiments often publicly presented at the present day nothing is more common than to show how completely the mesmeric trance may quench all sense of pain, I do not think that any treatise on the subject has hitherto made an attempt to account, in anything that can be called a scientific manner, for these remarkable phenomena. Least of all have the modern writers — limiting themselves willfully to a contracted view of the whole subject — been in a position to investigate the real causation of mesmeric anæsthesia. It would indeed be impossible to do this with any prospect of success without taking into account the deeper occult science of the whole subject, and no ordinary knowledge acquired by the simple examination of the human physique could enable any mere

physician to guess at the manner in which magnetic force operates to suspend the normal activity of the nervous system. Any attempt, indeed, to investigate the more subtle characteristic of the human organism, without taking into account some of those higher principles which are not within the cognizance of the ordinary senses, and still less open to investigation by the instruments of the dissecting room, must necessarily prove abortive. The seat of consciousness is not in the physical matter of the body, and thus all questions having to do with the manner in which consciousness of pain can be suspended, must concern themselves, even if they do not have to go higher, with the astral principles of the subject.

Now I have already pointed out that that force itself which differentiates organic from inorganic matter is already one which appertains to the astral plane, and I have also indicated that the septenary division of principles, described in a preceding chapter, must be itself still further analyzed before we can fully apprehend the working of consciousness even in its least elevated forms. And thus the force of which I have now to speak, although not belonging to any higher stratum

of the human constitution than the second principle, nevertheless is itself distinct from vital energy in its simplest aspect. The truth is, that when we talk of the nerves as the channels for conveying sensation in the one direction to the true Ego, or in the other for conveying the will force of the Ego to the bodily organism, we are talking, to use a rough but not inaccurate analogy, of the steam pipes connecting the boiler with the engine, while omitting all notice of the steam. That which really is the medium for the conveyance of consciousness or will, as the steam is the medium for the conveyance of force in the case of the engine, is what may be most conveniently described as the "nerve aura."

And at this point I know that many readers will make a pause, and ask by what process of experimentation I have arrived at the knowledge I possess with regard to this nerve aura. My reply is, by the only method of investigation which can possibly be applied to such a problem. No physical experiment can deal with the matter. No knowledge to be disinterred from medical speculations concerning the nerves and the brain will help us one step on the road towards the conclusions we seek. The only

way of acquiring information concerning the higher principles of the human body, is by bringing to bear on the problem some of those higher principles themselves. To illustrate what I mean, let me remind readers of any books worth speaking of concerning curative mesmerism, that no observation is more abundantly established, whether by the early inquirers, or by those of a more recent date, who inquire with a higher purpose than the mere establishment of a preconceived hypothesis, than those which show that mesmeric patients in trance are enabled to prescribe for themselves, to diagnose their condition with a confidence completely surpassing the skill of any physical practitioner, and above all are especially capable of describing the way in which magnetic influences work upon them, and to indicate any modification that may be required in their magnetic treatment. In point of fact the mesmeric sensitive becomes clairvoyant in reference to such problems as those we have under discussion, and can discern the operations of nature in connection with the astral principles of man which necessarily defy any scrutiny from the physical senses.

Now the early mesmerists, though con-

stantly availing themselves of this fact to guide them in the treatment of their patients, did not for the most part possess the advantage of any occult knowledge to begin with, which could prompt them to direct their inquiries along fruitful channels such as would lead them to generalizations concerning the forces of the superior planes. Realizing myself enough of the esoteric laws at work to give greater point and significance to my inquiries, I have been enabled, by working with sensitive gifts of an unusually high order, in the case of some clairvoyants with whom I have had to deal, to get these mysteries concerning the nerve aura intelligently explained, and to make out the manner in which the vital magnetism of a mesmeric operator may affect the action of this nerve aura in the mesmeric state.

To realize what takes place, let us, in the first instance, imagine a condition of things which is not exactly what takes place, but will pave the way for a comprehension of the actual course of events. The nerve aura belonging to any given subject is, in a certain sense, a portion of his organism. It is in direct relation with the vehicles of the higher consciousness — and though undoubt-

edly in the first instance leading along the nerves to the brain, is merely at that point articulated, so to speak, with the vehicles of higher consciousness — with the soul, let us say for the convenience of the moment. Now, it is a fundamental fact concerning the complex organism of which we are speaking, that the higher vehicles which, in the normal condition of things, are in close and intimate union — so to speak, in admixture with — the matter of the physical body, are nevertheless separable therefrom in a way that does not involve the final and complete separation which takes place at death. Advanced students of occultism do not require any other argument to support the statement I have just made beyond their own constant experience of actually separating the consciousness from the body. But without appealing to quite such lofty testimony, the records of clairvoyance are fertile in examples of cases in which people describe themselves as looking at themselves, — contemplating their own body as from an external point of view.

Without the help of occult science to interpret what is really taking place in this case, some writers are inclined to invent

elaborate theories of complicated subjective phenomena to account for such transactions. In reality they are very simple, and simply what they seem. Questioned on this subject, any clairvoyant in a genuine magnetic trance would describe his consciousness as seated in something at all events external to his body. Not being on the lookout for such conditions, few of the earlier mesmerists, if any, thought of asking questions pointing to such a condition of things, and clairvoyants are very rarely spontaneous in pouring out information; they require to be cross-examined before exhibiting their knowledge in full perfection, or rather before bringing their emancipated perceptions to bear on the problems they have to deal with, so as to develop this knowledge if required.

However, taking the fact to be as I say, and leaving persons inclined to dispute it to search for the evidence in its favor in books dealing with occult science generally, let me ask my readers now to consider what is the situation of affairs as regards the consciousness that the sensitive out of the body retains concerning the body he has left behind. How, to begin with, has it come to pass that

he is out of the body under the mesmeric influence? And here I bring in my strained situation in order to make the position more intelligible. The magnetism of the mesmerist has drenched the nervous system of the patient, expelling and replacing the nerve aura properly belonging to his organism. That expelled nerve aura still unites the brain with the true consciousness, but there is no longer any nerve aura uniting the body with the brain. Now, since it is wholly along the nerve aura that the message of sensation is conveyed, the nerve itself playing the part that the steam pipe plays to the steam, nothing which transpires in connection, let us say, with the patient's arm can be in any way reported to the seat of consciousness. The magnetism of the mesmerist, though a fluid of the same kind in nature as the nerve aura it has displaced, is not proper to the subject, it does not constitute a channel of communication which can reach from his arm to his true soul, and all communication of that kind is thus cut off.

It will be convenient here at once to bring into the field of view another mesmeric phenomenon besides anæsthesia, pointing out that the explanation I am now giving equally

accounts for the well-known immobility of a mesmeric sensitive in a trance as regards any spontaneous movement, and also for the rigidity of the limbs when they are set in any particular direction by the mesmerist. It is his intention, working through his own aura now intimately blended with the nervous system of his subject, which determines what state of the muscles shall be superinduced by the machinery which the nerve aura controls. He extends the sensitive's arm, for example, desiring that it shall remain immovable in the position in which he places it. By the hypothesis no other desire can come into play to interfere with that condition of things, and immovable, therefore, the arm remains.

Now, in order that what actually takes place may be exactly appreciated, I must explain here that under no circumstances does the magnetism of the mesmerist entirely displace the nerve aura of the patient, but it penetrates and, so to speak, dominates it, subduing all its vibrations for the time being, replacing it as regards all the activity of its functions, and accomplishing in regard to the phenomena with which we have been dealing precisely what would be accomplished

supposing the original aura were entirely expelled. The only portion of the sensitive's aura which is not thus dominated is that which has to do with the mechanical and involuntary movement of the body, the action of the lungs and the heart, and so on; and here in the first instance the activity of such nerves can hardly be thought of as directly related to the consciousness of the soul. It is not necessary to go into a minute examination of the way in which the involuntary muscles are governed by nerves and a nerve aura of an equally involuntary character, but it is obvious on the face of things that there is a difference between such nervous energy and the nerve energy of the voluntary muscles; and this may sufficiently explain for our present purpose the fact, that whereas the voluntary nervous system can be affected by the mesmerist's aura in the way I have been describing, nature happily guards the sensitive from the stoppage of the lower vital machinery during such a condition.

It will be seen that the principle of this explanation equally covers such cases as I have hitherto been thinking of, in which the whole physical organism is drenched with the operator's magnetism, and the conscious-

ness of the subject expelled from it for the time being, and also those other cases in which local anæsthesia can be produced by mesmeric treatment, so that an arm, for example, may be made insensible to pain while the sensitive is fully awake, and able himself to experiment on his condition by sticking pins into the insensitive flesh. In the case where the operation is carried out in its entirety, the nerve aura of the brain itself is dominated by that of the operator, and none of the senses are in any degree of activity. The true consciousness is then out of the body altogether, sometimes to an extent which makes it difficult for the subject to go through the slight muscular movement required for articulate speech. In such cases it will be familiar to every mesmerist who has handled clairvoyant subjects that the thing to do is to demesmerize the lips,— that is to say, by a conscious effort of will associated with the attractive force of the fingers, to draw out the alien magnetism from that portion of the subject's organism; then the original nerve aura is restored to potential activity, and the subject is enabled to speak while still remaining in the trance condition. In the case of the local effect the nerve aura

is simply dominated in the limb under treatment; in the head and in the body generally the normal condition of the nervous system continues, and the patient is to all intents and purposes awake.

The familiar mesmeric phenomenon involved in the transference of sense from the mesmerist to the sensitive is precisely in accordance with this somewhat more elaborate explanation of anæsthesia and artificial catalepsy.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NATURE OF SENSITIVENESS.

MANY of the most familiar experiments in that kind of mesmerism which has latterly been played with rather as an amusement than seriously investigated, have to do with the transfer of sensations or states of consciousness from the operator to the subject under conditions that have nothing to do with the five senses. I do not propose to burden these pages with elaborate records of such experiments, with the names, dates and places concerned. Books devoted to such records teem with elaborate examples of the phenomenon before us. Any sense may be the nucleus, as it were, around which these transferred impressions can be gathered. A duly qualified mesmerized subject may be at one end of a room, the operator may look at the page of a book at the other end, and the mesmerized subject will be able to read the words as they pass across the operator's vision. If he hears a faint sound, quite incapa-

ble of making itself audible in the natural way to the sensitive, the sensitive in turn will hear that sound. If he receives a physical sensation, like the prick of a needle, the sensitive in relation with him will start and show by some appropriate movement that the sensation was transferred to the corresponding part of his or her body, and in exactly the same way phenomena of taste and smell can be, and have been scores of times, transferred from operator to subject. When we approach the consideration of these phenomena we find ourselves at once in a region of mesmeric practice altogether out of gear with those simple transactions having to do with curative processes, with which some people erroneously imagine that mesmeric science comes to an end.

Of course such phenomena as I am now approaching are only possible in reference to persons whose susceptibility to mesmeric influence is very acute, and this may be the appropriate moment to enter more at length on the consideration of what really constitutes mesmeric sensitiveness. To analyze this with as much precision as that which might be applied to the treatment of a chemical compound would not be possible, unless

we started with as full an appreciation of all the elements which go to make up the psychic nature of man as we possess in regard to the physical attributes of the elementary bodies. Without claiming any greater admission than is surely involved in the view of humanity which most people entertain, we may recognize a human creature as at all events a composite entity to this extent, that he has a spiritual or psychic nature of some sort in union during life with his body. Furthermore, the fact that avenues of perception, having to do with the psychic nature, exist independently of the five senses, may almost be proved as a broad proposition by the experience of dreams, even before we approach those far more scientific proofs involved in mesmeric experiment. If any one at the present day endeavors to cling to the hypothesis that only through the channel of the five senses can states of consciousness be conveyed to the real ego of a human being, all we need say here is that so narrow and ignorant a view of the subject unfits an inquirer for dealing with the Rationale of Mesmerism. He must first take the moderate pains by which he will be able to acquaint himself with notorious facts.

But starting from the general principle that the psychic nature of man has its own appropriate channels of approach other than, or over and above, those that lead through the physical senses, we may recognize very quickly that the complicated phenomena of transferred sensations under mesmeric treatment fall into their places as varied expressions of one simple truth. The establishment of the mesmeric condition has set up magnetic relations between the auras of the two persons concerned, and the conditions of consciousness acquired by the operator through his own senses, and then by a natural automatic process reflected in his own aura, are equally reflected in the aura of his subject, and thence directly transferred to those innermost centres of consciousness which the subject's senses are equally able to approach, and which, therefore, when excited in his own nature, seem to him to have been excited in the ordinary way.

Take for example the simple case to which I referred just now, of a mesmerist who so arranges things that a friend shall prick him with a needle in the arm or hands held behind his back, or in any way not seen by the sensitive, and in which the sensitive betrays

immediate consciousness of the sensation. I have seen a sensitive under my own treatment move one hand hastily over the other as though brushing off an annoyance, when the back of my own corresponding hand behind my back has been pricked by a third person. Here we may conjecture that nothing really transpires in that particular spot of the sensitive's person which seems to feel the sensation, but whatever may be the state of consciousness of the ego due to a prick in the back of the hand, that state of consciousness is superinduced, so to speak, by a short cut in the case of the transferred mesmeric sensation. Lodged in the innermost consciousness it suggests the idea of having been occasioned in the usual way, and hence the impression that it is a prick in the back of the hand. Does the idea seem fantastic, or unsupported by adequate experience? The truth is that a precisely similar phenomenon has been utterly familiar from time immemorial, and every doctor at all events knows that people who have lost an arm or a leg will testify to the strange fact that they constantly seem to feel pain in the missing hands or feet. They seem to feel that pain because in some

way the centre of consciousness has been affected in the same way that it would have been if the hands or feet had been present, and had suffered injury. The subject assigns the sensation to its normal cause.

Very well, then, we have, in considering what it is that constitutes sensitiveness to the order of phenomena now under consideration, to do with the psychic element in the human constitution, and the question turns entirely upon the extent to which that psychic constitution is predominant, or altogether absorbed in, and overwhelmed by, the physical nature.

It will be understood that in the theory I am going to define I am expressing conclusions derived from the study of many other departments in human psychology besides those directly concerned with the explanations given. To put forward these explanations on what would be recognized as a scientific method, I ought to start from the basis of positively known facts, and building up, with the help of definite experiments, fresh knowledge bit by bit, arrive at the results offered for acceptance. Nor is that scientific method to be found fault with in regard to the investigations of the deeper

mysteries of man's constitution as a whole; but we can only derive a comprehension of the true theory of mesmeric results by first of all getting a conception of that constitution as a whole, and then deriving from such aggregate knowledge whatever specific knowledge may be required to illuminate the problem in hand. And as this little volume does not profess to be a complete compendium of human psychology in all its bearings, it would be impossible to follow step by step the whole investigation which leads to that which I hold to be the correct view of the subject, the theosophical view, namely, of the psychic and spiritual attributes of humanity. That which I propose to offer in reference to the branch of the subject now coming forward for treatment — the theory of mesmeric sensitiveness — is a clear statement of theory deduced from theosophic teaching at large, and claiming attention, I think, at this crisis by all students of mesmerism as at all events coherent and rational, and subject in itself to experiments directed to test its validity in reference to its most important elements.

Sensitiveness, to begin with, must not be regarded as an absolute fact in any one's na-

ture, like his height in inches or his weight in pounds. Sensitiveness and the complementary characteristics which may be called mesmeric force, are subject to a practically infinite degree of variation in different persons, and the maximum degree of sensitiveness will feel the impact of the minimum degree of mesmeric force. In the same way the maximum degree of mesmeric force will enable the minimum degree of sensitiveness to cognize its influence, and between these two extremes the whole body of phenomena connected with mesmeric experiment are always moving up and down along a double sliding scale. There are no people living so densely involved in matter, whose intelligence, that is to say, has come to immerse itself so entirely in the physical brain, as to be utterly beyond the reach of mesmeric power *in excelsis*. Here let me point out that I am taking as the example of *minimum* sensitiveness a human being very far removed from the bottom of the scale of human evolution. The entanglement of thought here is only superficial, but may easily mislead those who have no clue to the proper comprehension of the problem.

The bottom of the human scale for pur-

poses of mesmeric sensitiveness is not to be found in the person of the dull-witted clodhopper, without a conscious thought directed to any subject more elevated than bacon and furrows. It is quite possible that such a clodhopper, however incapable of adding two rows of figures together, might be highly sensitive to mesmeric influence, and it is equally true that the person who would represent the very highest degree of mesmeric influence imaginable must almost necessarily be also highly gifted in every intellectual aspect. These statements fall into a truly scientific shape in the mind if we think of the three typical human beings thus imagined as ranged, not along a straight line, but along a cyclic curve. Our clodhopper, for the purposes of this broad illustration, will represent the divine essence, let us say, coming into human form. As it accomplishes the cyclic process thus entered upon, it first of all evolves to the highest possible degree the physical aspect in which it is struggling to express itself, and at one point in the curve accomplishes the maximum degree of development possible as regards the physical instrument with which it is working. The race (here, of course, we

are speaking of the race as the continuous unity, and the single individuals as points in its progress) having accomplished its maximum physical intellectual development continues along the returning curve of the cycle, and without losing an atom, or an attribute, so to speak, of the advantage gained, proceeds to reëvolve its so far hidden psychic attributes which express themselves in physical intelligence at the nadir point of the cycle, and are afterwards destined to respiritualize themselves, plus all the acquisitions due to the descent into matter. The centre of evolution which is being carried round the cycle of course does not return to that same point in the figure from which the cycle sprang, but to the corresponding point on a higher level. The further examination of that idea, however, would take us beyond the subject now specially before us. I shall have to return to the cyclic idea directly, but having for the moment broadly defined the origin, subsidence, and re-development of sensitiveness as a human attribute, let me show what the same methods of thought bring out in regard to the complementary characteristics of mesmeric force.

I have called them complementary for con-

venience' sake, but let us not for a moment imagine that one human being is exclusively a sensitive, another human being exclusively a mesmerist. The very maximum degree of mesmeric force is, on the contrary, necessarily associated with the maximum degree of sensitiveness, because the maximum degree of either can only be due to the possession by the person in question of supreme knowledge concerning both aspects of his nature. Remember, sensitiveness does not necessarily mean liability to have the will enslaved by another. That is only one of the aspects of sensitiveness of one kind. We shall map all this out clearly in a little while, though at first the complications of the problem cannot but appear rather bewildering to those who are unfamiliar with this system of thinking. That which I mean in speaking of sensitiveness at this stage of the explanation is the faculty of cognizing impressions derived through the aura, and the corresponding senses belonging to that element of the human constitution which is allied with its aura. The cultivation of these senses and faculties, it will be seen on a moment's reflection, when allied with a clear comprehension of all they mean, is a

power and not a weakness. To be perceptive of the feeblest effort of will or desire thrown out by another human being under conditions involving the full comprehension of how that sensitiveness is brought into play, is equivalent to possessing a faculty by means of which the slightest impulse of thought or desire in any other person can be cognized or tested.

It does not follow that the sensitive of the kind I am now describing must necessarily give way or submit to that thought or influence, or to any thought or influence even of a very much more powerful kind. If the sensitiveness is of the supreme sort I speak of, it is supremely under the control of the being to whom it belongs, constituting indeed a part, and a very important part, of his own power as a mesmerist; for his sensitiveness would enable him to perceive exactly what he was doing, to regulate the impulses of his own magnetic emanations in such a way that they would go precisely to their mark instead of being wasted like those of the non-sensitive mesmerist, even granting him a good deal of force. In fact, the non-sensitive mesmerist works, so to speak, in the dark, and wishing to hit a mark before

him, flings a great handful of missiles at it in the hope that one or other may hit. The mesmerist who is supremely sensitive, works as one seeing his mark in the light, and projects with accurate aim, and correspondingly small expenditure of energy, the single missile required to touch it.

This reflection, once comprehended, will enable any one to see how exasperating it is to those who comprehend mesmerism in its spiritual and psychic aspects to hear the silly babble of the world about the supposed weak-mindedness of all who come under mesmeric influence. There is no more weak-mindedness necessarily involved in being sensitive on the psychic plane than in being sensitive to the delicacies of musical expression. Some people who are otherwise very brainless may be very highly gifted as musicians, but on that account we need not assume brainlessness to be a necessary condition of a fine ear. And this illustration helps us to another which may be appropriately offered for the consideration of any one who boasts that his own strength of will is such as to render him absolutely unapproachable by mesmeric influence. This boast would be precisely analogous to one

a person quite unable to distinguish one tune from another might make, if he thought fit to plume himself proudly upon the fact that no one, not even Patti or Joachim, could produce sounds possessing the smallest aspect of beauty to his senses.

However, it is true that a considerable degree of mesmeric energy may reside in many human organisms which have not yet evolved the faculty — the high, exalted faculty — of conscious sensitiveness. Like the other characteristic, it must be imagined as following the evolution of the human race round the inevitable cycle. But there is an important difference to be borne in mind when we are considering these two aspects of psychic perfection, the positive and the negative, or rather the active and the passive. Sensitiveness, just because in the first or lower limb of the cycle it is unassociated with intellectual development, is a purely passive faculty. The whole body of faculties to which it belongs has not been evolved to that point in which self-consciousness becomes its leading attribute. The distinction here, of course, is that consciousness alone, an attribute shared by humanity with the lower animals, does not bring with

it the tendency to reflect concerning its own attributes. It is only the intellectual man who, pondering on the problems of his own being, and turning his observation inward, renders himself the subject of his own reflections, and can be called self-conscious in the significance with which I here employ the phrase.

Well, then, there cannot be mesmeric force until the point of self-consciousness is reached in humanity, and that point reaching its culmination in the highest degree of mere intellectual development, the point of such highest development may be conveniently regarded as the starting point from which mesmeric power begins to show real energy. Here again let me qualify this broad statement of the case to guard against what seem contradictions in experience. Many of the most remarkable mesmerists have not been men quite on the intellectual level of some amongst purely materialistic giants in science or literature, but that is due to the fact that all growths in nature are gradual. As the race approaches the condition of its highest intellectual manifestation the other faculties belonging to that condition rise into activity, and in individual

cases some of these, by special effort directed to that end, may be brought to perfection in advance of others with which they are, properly speaking, bracketed. But I do venture to assert with positive conviction that the facts of nature must correspond to the broad assertion, that, granting the same conditions of full health, vitality, bodily vigor, and habits of life conducive to the development of magnetic energy, the man who besides these attributes possessed a highly developed intellect would be the more powerful mesmerizer of the two.

And now let us take our already evolved mesmerist who as yet is nothing else, that is to say, who as yet has not climbed the upward limb of the evolutionary cycle, and who has not yet developed the receptive psychic faculties of his own nature, and let us consider how his energy operates on the various classes of sensitiveness with which he may have to do. Let us begin with the sensitives of the lower order; those in which the psychic attributes have not yet been entirely dissolved in matter, or, so to speak, translated into their highest material equivalent, and who are represented in most complete perfection by our typical clodhopper.

The free aura of the clodhopper is the attribute on which I wish to focus the reader's attention. In using this phrase, "free aura," I venture to borrow an analogy from chemistry, where we might speak of "free" acid left in a solution in excess of that required to neutralize a basic salt. The whole aura, to put the matter that way, of the undeveloped man has not yet been employed in neutralizing matter. It is hanging about, and may be spoken of as free, in the sense of being uncombined. On that free aura the mesmerist's influence readily finds a lodgment. The idea conveyed from his own mind to that of the subject does not present itself to the subject's mind as something coming from without. He has not yet learned to analyze his consciousness to the degree of being able to draw such distinctions. He simply finds an impulse of some kind arising in his own mind; he does not reason about it, or question it in any way, he simply acts upon it as he would act upon any other impulses spontaneously arising in his own mind, unless restrained by some countervailing consideration having to do with penalties of an easily comprehended nature which would equally serve to restrain

the impulses of a horse or a dog. And even these are in abeyance when the question is of an impulse implanted by the mesmerist's will, because the very act of the mesmerist in taking charge of the subject's aura, has operated to suspend its normal activity as an influence directing the brain, and with the entrancement of the subject's lower nature an almost absolutely blank field of operations is left to the mesmerist, just because so far there is no higher nature consciously evolved in the person under treatment.

Here we get the first broad idea interpreting the phenomena of mesmeric subjection in reference to which the hypnotists of the present day are so much interested, and so deeply anxious, if we may accept their assurances to that effect. All these phenomena of hypnotic obedience carried to lengths which startle the observer are phenomena having to do with impressions left by the mesmerists concerned on the subject's aura. They may or may not spring immediately into activity. If the impression on the aura is that a certain delay shall be operative before the message, so to speak, is passed on, that impression is obeyed like any other.

It is the unintellectual psychic nature which is obedient in such a case, the psychic nature which has not yet become self-conscious; which is so much abstract psychic or spiritual energy in process of translation into a self-conscious being, but for the time being unqualified to reason about the right or wrong of its impulses, simply because it has not yet been converted into reasoning faculty.

And, be it observed, that in order to maintain the set of conditions we are now contemplating, it is not necessary that we should keep our mind fixed upon the extreme example thereof, — the case in which the human subject is as nearly unintelligent as we can imagine a human being to be. At a later stage of the process, though at one still on the earlier side of the meridian of our cycle, a great deal more of the psychic nature may be translated into intellectual capacity, and the person concerned may be very far from being a fool or an ignoramus, and yet that which is still psychic in the nature may have undergone but a comparatively small amount of evolution. Let us always bear in mind the character of the cycle we are thinking of, and the grad-

ual nature of all the processes with which it is concerned. Education of that superior element in the total consciousness, which, for convenience of talking about it here, let us call the Higher Self — the education of the Higher Self may begin, it is true, long before the nadir point of physical evolution is reached, but on the other hand it may not, — or its evolution may only have just begun. It is the later period of the cyclic process to which the evolution of that Higher Self properly belongs; and thus, when a person still on the eastern side of life's meridian, — to use a pretty figure employed lately by Dr. Huggins in application to a cycle smaller than that with which I am now dealing, but still analogous to it in nature, — a person, I say, still on the eastern side of the meridian may have a very great degree of intellectual development, and yet a Higher Self barely capable of reasoning about the impressions it may receive from external sources when deprived of the support of that physical intellect on which it has been leaning to a very great extent.

If the brain instrument becomes paralyzed for the time being by any of the nervous influ-

ences that may be exerted upon it by either mesmeric or hypnotic processes, the psychic nature may be almost as stupidly obedient to the mesmerist's impulse as if there had been no intellect in association with it at all. So then in the case of a hypnotic suggestion intended to operate at a period subsequent to the establishment of the impression, such a person will find the impulse to do whatever he may have been directed to do rising up in his mind like a spontaneous desire, and certainly if there is no glaring reason why he should not do the thing, he will do it. Supposing that there is a glaring reason in morals or obvious duty why he should not obey the impulse, a conflict may arise in his nature, one issue of which quite possibly is a reversion to the paralyzed condition of the intellect which was operative during the original mesmeric process, and then the immoral influence is worked out without any impediment. Or, there may be an interior convulsion in which the intellect asserts itself as predominant over the psychic impulse. And, again, it may be that the Higher Self, although very imperfectly developed, has nevertheless reached a certain stage of its growth in which it is not

entirely without the power of controlling its incarnate tendencies.

But now let us suppose that the mesmerist is operating on some sensitive who belongs to the other half of the cycle of which we are speaking. Let us observe in passing that he will not obtain any effect whatever on the person who represents the nadir point of physical evolution. The perfectly intellectual materialist will not be subject, at all events, to any mesmeric influence of the kind of which we are now talking. He, too, in spite of his lofty self-conceit, would be as helpless as a straw in the wind if subject to mesmeric influence belonging to the highest developments of humanity in the upper half of the cycle; but we are dealing still with our mesmerist who is but beginning to be one, who belongs himself to the nadir point, that is to say, who is an ordinary person in the world, like the rest of us all around. When he begins to apply his influence to some one in whom sensitiveness is beginning in any appreciable way to develop itself in the shape of completely conscious psychic existence, independent of, or over and above, that of the physical plane, he may attain many results which are su-

perficially like those he has got at in the earlier undertaking. All transferred impressions of taste, sound, or touch will of course be as readily operative through the Higher Self of a human being in process of spiritual exaltation, as through the Higher Self, however little capable of self-conscious thought, of the undeveloped human being. And when the task to be undertaken involves the employment of anything resembling clairvoyance — a branch of the subject which I reserve for special treatment presently — he will find the superior sensitive far more readily available for that lofty employment than the inferior, though the inferior is by no means incapable of clairvoyance within certain limits.

At the outset there is an immense practical difference between the sensitive who is such by reason of belonging to the upper limb of the cycle and the other. First of all it is very unlikely that the superior sensitive could be mesmerized by any ordinary mesmerist unless surrendering to that influence by a deliberate act of submission in the first instance. By the hypothesis the mesmerizable portion of the nature — if I may use that clumsy expression — is self-conscious in

the case of the superior sensitive; therefore it cannot be caught in a helpless state like the other. If the superior sensitive were to put the matter in words, he might say to the mesmerist: "You may be able to hurt me through faculties that you can hit at, but you cannot control me. I can defend myself even though I may be bruised in the encounter." But supposing the sensitive has no motive for taking up such an attitude, but on the contrary is in sympathy with the mesmerist, and quite willingly accepts through his psychic nature the guidance of the mesmerist, an external appearance of submissive obedience may arise, just as in the ordinary waking life one person may do what he is told through love, and another through fear. The nature of the obedience is quite different, though the external aspect may be nearly the same.

And here we come to the satisfactory aspect of that phenomenon which looks so alarming to the merely empiric students of hypnotic suggestion. Where the Higher Self which receives the mesmeric impression is a self-conscious and developed entity, it will only obey as long as the currents of sympathy between itself and the mesmerist

which originally disposed it to submission are maintained, and those currents will be violently disturbed, if not destroyed, should the mesmerist endeavor to impose an act on the subject which is repugnant or revolting to his own sense of right. I do not say that, even with a sensitive on the superior limb of the cycle, it would be theoretically inconceivable that a mesmerist might enforce obedience to an act to which the unfettered instincts of the subject would be opposed. If a voluntary submission, through currents of sympathy, have been given in the first instance, and if, through a very long and protracted mesmeric relationship, the subject has for years been in the habit of acquiescing in the impulses of the mesmerist, a habit of that sort might be very difficult to break, even if an extraordinary change took place in the nature and character of the mesmerist. But this is only translating to the higher plane (which, after all, is a region in which human relationships exist just as they do on this plane of being) of embarrassments which might equally ensue in the waking state. Take the case of a husband and wife, where the wife, to make the illustration parallel, is quite the husband's equal in

intelligence, but well disposed to play the feminine part in their relationship. If at a very early period of this relationship the husband suddenly shows unexpected impulses towards evil, and endeavors to conduct the wife along those paths, she would at once revolt; her own intelligence and sense of right would be in command of her actions. But, supposing that the husband through a long course of years acquires, by his manifestations of character and by all the acts of his life, her perfect trust and confidence, so that her habit of submission to an influence that she always finds entitled to respect becomes very deeply seated; in such a case, if we choose to suppose the husband suddenly developing proclivities to evil, it is not beyond the possibilities of the strained supposition that the wife would surrender to his example. The whole set of conditions is morally absurd; they could not arise except in something like an access of insanity, which would again bring its own safeguards with it; but just so do the obvious probabilities of the case provide us with an answer to the pet theory of persons who ignorantly object to the practice of mesmerism in regard to the possibility that the mesmerist

might improperly control a sensitive of the higher order. In marriage as well as in mesmerism there are many possibilities of danger lurking, and the destiny which befalls a woman who puts herself into the hands of a thoroughly bad husband may be deplorable to the last degree; but that is the analogy which exactly meets all talk about mesmeric dangers. Nothing could be more idiotic than for a sensitive to subject himself to the continued influence of a mesmerist in whose character he had no adequate confidence, just as it would be equally idiotic for a girl to rush into matrimony with a man of whom she knew nothing; but the moral of that reflection is that we should be careful in choosing our mesmeric and our matrimonial partners, and not that the institution in either case is to be finally repudiated. Indeed, to put a stop to marriage altogether because of the examples which occasionally exhibit its dangers, would be less intellectually absurd than to adopt the same course in regard to mesmerism; for, after all, mesmerism is a very much more gradual process than the other, and there is no moment at which the fatal ring is slipped on to the finger of the Higher Self. Even experiments must be

cautiously conducted, but you can be mesmerized a little and still draw back in time to avoid disaster. Social science has not yet evolved a corresponding safeguard for the marriage state.

CHAPTER VIII.

CLAIRVOYANCE.

We now approach that department of our subject but for which it might almost be regarded as one belonging rather to medical practice than to the psychological inquirer.

Perhaps this is the place where I may most appropriately deal with the attempt, already made by some medical practitioners just beginning to dabble in experiments with mesmerism, to warn off all intruders on that domain and reserve it exclusively for themselves. That notion is one of the silliest among many which arise from ignorance of what mesmerism really is, and the claim of the doctors to have mesmerism reserved by law for their own exclusive service is doubly ridiculous, because medical men as a body, in this country especially, exhibited a bigoted intolerance of the whole subject that was simply disgraceful until the growth of independent knowledge forced them to recognize some parts of the discovery as a

natural truth, and have shown themselves by all they have done in the past as singularly unqualified to handle the more subtle investigations which the future progress of this great science will bring into play. We may do all honor to the few doctors who in the past, and the greater number who in the present, are identified with the therapeutic developments of Mesmer's discovery; but at the same time we must remember that for every single Dr. Esdaile or Dr. Elliotson there were scores of contemporary practitioners who brutally refused to allow their patients to enjoy the privileges which mesmerism held out to them, and when one of Dr. Elliotson's leading cases was brought before the notice of the Medico-chirurgical Society that body distinguished itself by passing resolutions the shame of which it will have some difficulty in getting rid of. The case in question has already been slightly referred to in an earlier chapter. A surgeon, Mr. Ward, had cut off a man's leg at the hospital over which Dr. Elliotson presided, while the patient was under the influence of a mesmeric trance brought on by the treatment of Mr. Topham, a barrister, who was studying mesmerism at the

time. Frightful as the operation was, the patient suffered it quite unconsciously, and was entirely spared the torture to which he would otherwise have been subjected. The assembled body of physicians and surgeons rose in revolt at this unheard of transaction when it was described in a paper brought before them by Mr. Ward. They passed resolutions denying the paper any place on the records of the Society, as something that was manifestly incredible and absurd, and linked themselves to the idiotic hypothesis that, if any truth resided in Mr. Ward's statement, the patient had probably been trained not to express outward symptoms of pain. They wound up by declaring that, even if such an absurdity could be realized, it would be flying in the face of Nature, which had ordained pain as a necessary concomitant of surgical operations!

This is only a typical illustration of the spirit in which the medical profession generally welcomed the advent of the new discovery, and the claim of that profession, now that the reality of the discovery has become too glaring for denial, to take it out of the hands of all such inquirers as those who have brought it to its present degree of

perfection, and reserve it for their own use, is, to begin with, one of the most impudent that could be advanced. Doctors might as well have claimed at an earlier stage in the advance of science that because electricity was susceptible of some therapeutic applications, *it* should be reserved by law for the use of medical men, no one being permitted to carry on electrical experiments, or to investigate the nature of that force, unless he belonged to the faculty. We may imagine how far electrical science would have advanced if that course had been adopted, and its adoption now in reference to mesmerism would interpose a barrier to the advancement of human knowledge, the monstrous character of which can only be appreciated by those who know something of the higher psychic or spiritual aspects of mesmerism, to which the attention of the reader will now be directed.

In the current manuals of the day which deal with hypnotism very little is said about its psychic aspects. The new departure has been taken as far as possible with the view of keeping it in harmony with the limited series of facts brought to light by recent medical experiments that have captivated

popular interest. But it must not be supposed that the real literature of mesmerism, which altogether lies behind this modern series of relatively narrow and departmental treatises, is deficient in the evidence required to establish the reality of clairvoyance, both as regards space and time, as a fact in nature.

Deleuze has dealt with this branch of the subject in a special memoir of very remarkable interest, entitled "Mémoire sur la Faculté de Prévision," published in 1836 in Paris. Nothing in the more recent literature of the subject exhibits clearer commonsense as applied to the investigation of the delicate phenomena with which he is concerned. He is not tainted with the foolishness which has so beset more recent writers, of disregarding all work in this department done in the past. On the contrary, he points out now that, since the faculties of man are the subject of the inquiry before him, those faculties, whatever they are, were the same two thousand years ago as at the present day. The progress of physical science has given the modern world an immense advantage in dealing with inquiries of a purely physical character, and such in-

quiries as carried on by ancient writers are now of little value. But the very fact that the attention of ancient philosophers was not distracted by so many departments of physical inquiry rendered them the better, rather than the less, able to arrive at a just appreciation of those human attributes on which their attention was fixed, and within the period which was recent when M. Deleuze wrote, the phenomena of magnetic "somnambulism" — to use the expression adopted by the earlier French writers to describe what we now generally call "clairvoyance" — had been under observation for about fifty years. Cases of prevision were recorded in the medical journals, and he says: "Open the 'Memoirs of the Society of Strasburg,' and the 'Bibliothèque du Magnétisme,' and the accounts of medical experience connected with somnambulism published in Germany, Russia, and Holland, and you will find the same class of facts; and the concurrence in this way of a crowd of people attesting facts of the same order which each of them has observed separately, constitutes proof to which there is no reply. It is impossible that men of all countries, without relations with one another, who do not even adopt the

same theories, and amongst whom we find many physicians, should be in a conspiracy to attest falsehoods."

I select a few other passages from the essay as it proceeds: —

"Most metaphysicians reason as if there existed nothing in the world but that of which our five senses demonstrated the existence. They admit only two orders of things, sensible objects and the consciousness which receives the sensations. They forget that we perceive merely those objects which affect our senses, and that there may exist an infinity of objects unknown to these, and to which our organs are inaccessible. The faculty of comprehending the form of an object at a distance would be inconceivable to one born blind but for the testimony of others. If we had one sense the more, our consciousness would be modified accordingly; . . . let us then imitate the blind; let us assure ourselves of the reality of phenomena by the results, observing the *somnambule* as the blind observe us."

"It is impossible, sometimes people say, to see the future, for the future does not exist. The present only has real existence; but, if the past has an existence relatively

to ourselves, that is merely because it has left its traces. It exists by its effects; the future exists by its germ. The past has produced the present, it was its cause; the future will be produced by the present, it will be its effect. When we consider the past we behold the cause in its effects; when we consider the future we see the effects in the cause."

"When a brilliant light illuminates the landscape we may admire its richness, but we do not see the stars which decorate the celestial vault. The rays they send from that incalculable distance reach our eyes in the day as well as in the night. Our internal faculty even exists the whole time, but it is only in the silence of other sensations that our souls discern the innumerable rays."

This essay was written with the intention that it should form an introduction to a great collection of cases illustrative of clairvoyant prevision. Deleuze had been a prolific writer before he penned the present memoir on the general subject of mesmerism, but he says that he specially reserved this profoundly interesting department for treatment by itself. He was not left at his work, however, long enough to complete this

undertaking. The memoir itself was the last of his writings, and it was published after his death by a friend who had endeavored, as far as he was able, to realize the original idea of supplying the accumulation of cases. Some of these are interesting and worth attention, but to translate them here at full length would involve an expansion of this little volume beyond the limits I contemplate. I will be content with briefly epitomizing one illustration which Deleuze himself arranged to give, and of which he seems himself to have obtained various attestations. This is the famous case of Cazotte's prophecy concerning the French Revolution, often vaguely referred to, but perhaps unfamiliar in its details to many of my readers.

The prediction is recorded by La Harpe in his collected works, published in 1806. He describes himself as having been present, at the commencement of the year 1788, at a dinner party given by one of his confrères of the Academy to a distinguished company, including people of the Court, of legal and literary distinction, and many Academicians. The conversation during the evening ran on the lines of Voltairean infidelity and atheism,

then coming so widely into fashion. The party was convulsed with delight at one anecdote told by a guest, whose hair-dresser had said to him, "Look you, sir, though I am but a miserable *carabin*, I have no more religion than anybody else." The only person who had not taken part in all these pleasantries was Cazotte, an amiable and original man, says La Harpe, but unfortunately infatuated with the reveries of the mystic. At last he spoke more seriously than the others.

"Gentlemen," said he, "be satisfied; you will see this grand and sublime revolution which you desire so much."

"No need to be a great sorcerer to foresee that," replied some.

"True, but perhaps it is necessary to be something of one to see the rest I have to tell you, namely, what will happen during this revolution."

Count D'Orsay said, with a sarcastic laugh, that a philosopher need not be annoyed at encountering a prophet.

"You, Count D'Orsay," said Cazotte, "will expire on the pavement of a dungeon. You will die of poison which you will have taken to escape the executioner — poison

which the happiness of that epoch will oblige you to carry always about you."

Some sensation followed, and Cazotte was rebuked for giving them a story less amusing than his "Diable Amoureux."

"But what has all that in common with philosophy and the Reign of Reason?"

"It is precisely in the name of philosophy and liberty, and under the Reign of Reason and its temples, that these things will happen."

"Ma foi!" said Chamfort; "you will not be one of the priests of those temples."

"But you, M. de Chamfort, will be one, and you will open your veins with twenty-two cuts with a razor, and nevertheless you will not die until some months afterwards. You, M. Vicq d'Azir, will not open your veins; you will have them opened six times in one day, during an access of gout, and you will die in the night. You, M. de Nicolai, you will die upon the scaffold. You, M. Bailly, will die on the scaffold; you, M. de Malesherbes, on the scaffold."

So far the ladies had taken no part in this prophecy, and the Duchesse de Gramont was laughingly congratulating herself that evidently she would be protected by her sex.

"Your sex, ladies, will not secure you this time. You will be treated like the men, without any difference. You, madame la duchesse, you will be conducted to the scaffold, you and many others with you in the *charrette* of the executioner, the hands tied behind the back."

The conversation still maintained an air of ridicule, and Madame de Gramont said something about hoping she would at least be allowed to see a confessor.

"No, madame," said Cazotte, "you will not have one, neither you nor any one. The last victim who will have one through grace, will be" — He hesitated a little while.

"Well, who is the happy mortal who is to receive this prerogative?"

"It will be the King of France."

At this appalling blasphemy the party seems to have broken up, thinking Cazotte's extravagance had been carried to dangerous lengths.

At first, says Deleuze, he regarded all this as fiction by La Harpe, but he set himself to work to get information and changed his opinion. He obtained a letter from the Comtesse de Genlis, who writes, "I have heard him (de La Harpe) state this story a

hundred times before the Revolution, and always in exactly the same way that I have everywhere seen it printed." M. Deleuze then found out the son of M. Cazotte, who declared that his father had always been gifted with the faculty of prevision in the highest degree, and had given numerous proofs of it. Without being able to guarantee the exact language used by La Harpe in his narrative, the son had no doubt whatever about its general truthfulness. A friend of M. Vicq d'Azir, inhabiting Rennes, bore testimony that this celebrated doctor had told the story of Cazotte's prophecy, in his presence, several times before the Revolution took place. Finally, M. Deleuze appends a letter by the Baron de Langon, in which he says, "I can assure you on my honor that I have heard Madame la Comtesse de Beauharnais repeat that she had been present on this historic occasion. She always told her story in the same way, and her testimony corroborates that of La Harpe."

A French writer, whose testimony on all subjects connected with clairvoyance is extremely important, — M. A. Teste, a doctor of Paris, — wrote in 1843 an interesting vol-

ume called "Manuel pratique de Magnétisme Animal," in which he records a multitude of experiences coming under his own observation. The sensitives with whom he worked, — chiefly those who were at the same time sensitives and patients, — foretold with exactitude the course and conclusion of their various maladies. One of the most interesting records has to do with the case of a lady referred to as Madame Hortense, the subject of a long illness for which M. Teste treated her, and during which he constantly mesmerized her in the presence of her husband, who was himself deeply interested in the whole study. Many days before the special event referred to, she told them that at half past three on a certain day she would have a fright that would cause her to fall and sustain some serious internal complications. They were aghast at this intelligence, and conceived that their care could not but ward off a danger so definitely predicted. Of course, the sensitive herself never retained the smallest recollection in her waking state of her own prophecies, and they told her nothing of this threatened disaster. Questioning her about it in her clairvoyant state, she maintained always that

they would not be able to ward it off, but that they need not be greatly concerned; she would certainly undergo a great deal of suffering and protracted illness, but would not die, and would ultimately completely recover. Still, they resolved to do their very utmost to resist the threatened danger; and both doctor and husband hovered round the patient — not ill enough to be in bed — the whole of that afternoon.

Well, I find it embarrassing to tell the story with the simple, straightforward candor of the French writer, because English ears are so singularly sensitive to details that seem to infringe decorum; but at the appointed time the lady insisted on a little privacy, during which a rat suddenly ran across her, frightening her in so unexpected a way that she fell down and suffered exactly the consequences which she had foretold, happily with the ulterior recovery. This is only one of a cloud of cases with which M. Teste deals, and I must leave those readers who wish to get personal touch with the multiplied proofs he has accumulated to search his writings for themselves.

A little thought will show that one essential difference between the phenomena of

clairvoyance and those coming into notice under other departments of mesmerism has to do with the essentially psychic character of the clairvoyant achievement. Everything belonging to the region of so-called hypnotic suggestion, however mysterious, may theoretically be accounted for by hypotheses which leave the sensitive a highly organized being, no doubt, but not necessarily one in which the psychic attributes must be considered as something independent of the bodily organism. And this reflection gives its real importance to the inquiry into the possibilities of clairvoyance. It is easy to miss the real significance of a new discovery, and to attach importance to the immediate practical outcome thereof, instead of to the light thrown by the practical results on hidden and previously obscure laws of nature. It is preëminently easy to make this mistake in dealing with the psychic characteristics of those mesmeric sensitives in whom clairvoyance is exhibited. We may take the thing in itself, a marvelous and enchanting gift, and say that for its own sake it is worth while to see if we cannot cultivate to a higher degree of perfection a power so filled with attractive interest. Any one who, by

passing into a magnetic trance, is thereby enabled to cognize events that are going on at a distance, is clearly in possession of a gift which cannot but be recognized as precious in itself. But when we begin to collate the various manifestations of this power, and to realize that no theory of latent senses attaining an unusual degree of delicacy and perfection in the sensitive will account for what takes place, we begin to perceive that the study of this power, in the rare cases where it is exhibited, may be a pathway opening up before us possibilities of acquiring real scientific knowledge concerning those spiritual, or at all events superphysical, elements in a human being which, hitherto left as the subject of vague religious faith, have never yet been regarded by the world at large as liable to come within the domain of exact knowledge.

Before going further, let me endeavor to group the various kinds of power or faculty exhibited by those whom I comprehensively describe as clairvoyants. First, we have to deal with that kind of clairvoyance which simply enables the sensitive to discern what is going on at some other place in the world. Sometimes the discernment extends for a

little distance only, sometimes it ranges half across the globe; but mere distance does not affect the nature of the faculty brought into activity. This kind of clairvoyance let me call "clairvoyance in space." Then we have to do with an extraordinary capacity, which has been shown, as Deleuze points out, so often as to make denial of the facts altogether silly, but in regard to which the difficulties as to giving explanation are very overwhelming. I refer to what Deleuze calls "prevision," that which in the popular idioms of our own country is known as "second sight," and that which for the purpose of this classification we may call "clairvoyance in time." There is a third department of the faculty with which we are dealing, in which the sensitive is enabled to take note of phenomena in nature, whether near him or far off, which do not belong to the order of those phenomena perceptible to the senses; that is to say, the clairvoyant may see and converse with entities of some kind which the ordinary, waking person does not see at all, and cannot put himself into relations with by any means in his power. Following the example of earlier writers, who certainly knew a good deal about the

realms of nature thus brought within our purview, let us call this sort of sight "astral clairvoyance."

There is yet a fourth sort of clairvoyance, which, from the point of view of people unfamiliar with such phenomena as we are dealing with, could hardly be distinguished, perhaps, from the last, but which I feel myself bound to treat separately here, because those who are students of anything really deserving to be called psychological science will conceive "astral clairvoyance" as having a limited and specific meaning. As something no less distinct really from astral clairvoyance, in the ascending scale of nature's refinements, than that itself is different from the phenomena of the physical senses, we must recognize what I will venture to call "spiritual clairvoyance" as a possibility of this wonderful attribute, but it will be more convenient to put off further explanations on this head till I reach the fourth order in due progress of time.

Again I say I am not engaged in this volume in recapitulating the enormously voluminous evidence on which our present knowledge concerning all these subjects, in a great measure, rests; but I will venture a passing

word of warning to any one who may think I am classifying fictions instead of facts. To stop here and challenge the fundamental bases on which my present interpretations rest, will merely serve to rank incredulous persons who do this with the bigoted doctors who in the beginning scoffed angrily at records having to do with the simpler aspects of curative mesmerism, of which no person acquainted with the experiences of the present day would be inclined to dispute the authenticity.

In regard to all three varieties of clairvoyance we shall arrive soonest at something resembling an intelligent appreciation of their *rationale* by assuming, at all events as a trial hypothesis, that they all have to do with that psychic side of the nature which, in analyzing the peculiarities of sensitiveness, I have already discussed pretty fully. What are we to infer as probably taking place when a sensitive sitting entranced in London becomes cognizant of some transaction going on in Paris? It must be one of two things. Either the transaction throws off emanations or vibrations of some kind or another into some medium pervading all space, just as the luminous bodies throw off vibrations

into the ether, and where these strike the perceptions or finer senses of persons no matter at what distance, they give rise to corresponding impressions, just as the rays emanating from a star affect the vision of those endowed with vision, no matter at what stupendous distances. And there is no essential and inherent absurdity in such a hypothesis, any more than in the actual facts having to do with the transmission of light. It might be alleged that transactions going on in the world are too numerous for each one to convey its own distinct impression, jostled as it must be by contact with incalculable millions of other such impressions hastening in all directions across its path. Impossible as it may be for us to comprehend the resources of nature by which such entanglements are averted, the vibrations of the luminiferous ether show, without going further, that nature is not embarrassed in dealing with such a problem. Take the actual facts of the simplest illustration that can be adopted; a group of people in a room. From every point in the walls and ceiling of the room, as from every point on the surface of every particle of furniture it may contain, complete spheres of radiation are

flowing in all directions, as is necessarily proved by the fact that anybody can see each object from whatever point of view he stands, and yet every one of those absolutely innumerable spheres of luminous vibration sends its waves across another's path without interfering with the accuracy of each series. It would not be an intellectually extravagant hypothesis to assume that there are conditions in nature under the operation of which everything on earth, and every process and action going on is perceptible to appropriate senses from every other position on earth that can be imagined. I do not say that this is the case; but merely to pave the way for subtle hypotheses which must be applied to any attempts to investigate such a profound mystery as clairvoyance, it is well to train the mind to appreciate the way in which no hypothesis must be rejected merely because of its complexity, if it harmonizes with the facts.

The other alternative hypothesis in regard to our simple case of clairvoyance as between London and Paris would be that something material in the highest sense of the word, — not physical as belonging to the orders of matter perceptible to the five senses, — but

something material, appertaining probably to the psychic nature of the sensitive, is projected under the operation of a current of thought or influence from the mesmerist or from the sensitive, assuming that to be awakened in some way by suggestion to him, from the place in which he is seated to the distant scene he is required to observe. Now that something which is projected may be either some portion of the psychic aura in which for the time being the real ego or spiritual consciousness of the person concerned may be seated, just as it is seated in the body during the activity of the body; or it is theoretically conceivable that the true ego, without quitting the physical organism altogether, may project in the direction to be observed some current of magnetic influence setting up a channel — if that expression will help to pass the idea from my mind to my reader — through the all-pervading medium, whatever it is, the luminiferous ether, or something finer still, which is the suitable medium in nature for the vibrations which convey impressions to the psychic organism.

Thus we have three hypotheses, either of which would fit in with the facts as far as it

goes, and I may say at once that I regard all three hypotheses as dimly shadowing forth before our minds real actualities in nature, although when the inquiries on which it seems reasonable to hope this generation is now entering are pushed a good deal further than they have generally gone as yet, we shall be able to understand these with very much greater precision than at present. But how does it come to pass that some persons subject to mesmeric influence are found to be clairvoyant and some incapable of exhibiting this quality, even in the least degree? We need go no further in search of an explanation than to the theory of sensitiveness I have already endeavored to lay down. The least developed psychic nature may be susceptible to impressions directly translated to itself from the aura of the mesmerist with which it has become blended, but if it is not developed on its own account into anything resembling a psychic consciousness, it will not be able to exert itself with an intelligent end in view at the bidding of the mesmerist. In other words, we shall never find our fine clairvoyants among people who are on what I have previously described as the lower limb, or east-

ern half, of the evolutionary cycle. It is only when a human being is sufficiently advanced in the scale of nature to have passed the point of full immersion in matter — at which his psychic nature may have expressed itself to the utmost of its capacity in the form of physical intellect — that the second process begins, ultimately evolving him, as he passes through the ordeal of material incarnation, into that relatively superior condition in which the psychic nature may truly be spoken of as the higher self.

I am slightly embarrassed at this stage of my exposition by the impossibility of setting forth any really scientific theory of mesmerism in its higher branches without drawing largely at every turn on the resources of occult science in its relation with the finer constitution of man. To go fully here into all the considerations which fortify the theories of occult science in their turn, would be to convert this volume into a repetition of others which have gone before, but just as I leave the reader to fill up his mind, if he wishes to do so, with details of mesmeric experiments from other books, merely working here with their significance and theoretical value, so I must refrain from any attempt

to vindicate on their own account the underlying principles of occult science concerning the constitution of man to which I may be bound occasionally to refer. Hitherto no writers on mesmerism have attempted any connected theory at all in regard to its higher manifestations, for want of the clue with which occult science now furnishes us; and at least I may appeal to readers who may be handling this volume without any special preparation, to the coherence of the whole body of theory I am now putting forward, as involving a *prima facie* reason for looking favorably on the teaching from which these theories are derived.

Clairvoyance, then, *in any of its higher aspects* should be regarded as a faculty of the higher self. The qualification I put in here is required to guard me from being supposed to mean that such clairvoyance as is involved in reading the time on a watch that has not been opened, or the words in a closed book, is a faculty of the higher self. That does not deserve to be called clairvoyance at all. It is an exercise of certain generally undeveloped senses stimulated to an abnormal degree of energy under the mesmeric process, but where distances have to be dealt

with which extend beyond the aura of the sensitive, some degree of intelligence in his own psychic envelope — if I may use that expression — must be assumed. By this phrase I mean to suggest the idea that, whereas in the undeveloped man the psychic nature is, so to speak, chaotic and unformed — unorganized in the most complete sense of the term — in the other case the man who has passed the nadir point of material development begins then to grow a psychic organism which may be thought of for the purposes of our present explanation as a finer kind of body to which his consciousness may be transferred under suitable conditions, and in which his mind can function as truly as in the waking state it functions in his physical body. The theory will not be completely intelligible without keeping hold of the fundamental occult principle of reincarnation, because without understanding that, all this talk on which I have ventured about people being before or behind the nadir point of material development would have very little meaning. But without attempting a complete exposition of the occult theory of reincarnation with all the collateral considerations which render it one of the most

vital truths of nature for every one concerned with the study of esoteric teaching, it will be enough to make my present theories intelligible if I say that according to the esoteric view every human being passes through a protracted series of physical lives with long intervening periods of spiritual experience, and that these successively represent the stages of growth in nature to which each individual has attained, and involve a regular cosmic progress which may be greatly hastened by abnormal efforts, and may be seriously impeded by misapplications of energy.

How is the activity of the higher self, of which the clairvoyant sensitive under ordinary conditions of life may be, perhaps, hardly conscious, to be set up? To answer this question I must attempt a little more fully to explain what students of occultism mean by the higher self. I have referred already to reincarnation as the method by means of which nature accomplishes the evolution of each individual monad. Between each of the physical births the true being or ego in question remains in the enjoyment of that degree of spiritual evolution represented by the sum total of all the efforts made, up

to that time, in the successive lives through which he has passed. Crude and popular conceptions on the subject of spiritual life entertain the idea that directly death occurs, the soul or spirit is set free, suddenly springing into a condition of angelic exaltation in which higher perceptions and higher knowledge come into play. Occult science does not recognize any proceeding so causeless in its character. That which is set free at death is the real ego at its then stage of evolution, and as I have already indicated, with human beings very little advanced along the cycle of evolution the nature of the spiritual consciousness is extremely torpid and undefined. That is merely another way of saying that, even in the realms of its higher activity, nature produces her achievements gradually. The gradual growth of the real spiritual ego, or higher self, is the great purpose in view throughout the whole undertaking of the successive lives. As already explained, after the neutral point of evolution — the perfect infusion of spirit in matter — is passed, the spiritual life begins to assert itself with renewed energy. The consciousness of the ego on spiritual planes then becomes a self-consciousness, and is

associated with the power of independent action.

Now, in the ordinary waking state the Higher Ego is to a great extent engaged with, and entangled with the physical plane. It largely inspires the mental and moral activity of the incarnate being, and although even during the waking state it may have some subtle relations with the spiritual plane, to which we need not at this moment pay attention, it is, to all intents and purposes, functioning on the plane of matter. But whenever the activity of the bodily organism is suspended, the ego is set free to function on the other planes where it has already established a right of entrée. Even during ordinary sleep that passage from one plane to another takes place, at all events whenever the sleep is healthy and profound. The experiences which the Higher Ego goes through on the spiritual plane in such cases are by no means always transferred to the physical memory on waking; on the contrary, such transfer is the exception and not the rule. A great branch of metaphysical study has been directed to the correct apprehension of this dual consciousness, of which every highly developed being is an ex-

ample, and the most important work on the subject to which the reader can be referred is du Prel's "Philosophie der Mystik," admirably translated into English by Mr. C. C. Massey, and called by him "The Philosophy of Mysticism." Du Prel shows that by a careful analysis of the experiences and facts within our reach it is demonstrable that the waking brain does not "contain," in the metaphysical sense, the whole of the consciousness of the human being functioning through that brain. More than this, the threshold of psychic consciousness — to use du Prel's expression — is constantly subject to advance or recession, and the process of pushing back that threshold so that as much as possible of the higher consciousness may be embraced within the area of physical brain recollection, constitutes the process which might in some of its bearings be described as the evolution of psychic faculties.

Now, this explanation fully apprehended will afford, almost without further words, a clue to the comprehension of what really takes place under mesmeric influence in connection with the higher clairvoyance. The physical body is entranced by the magnetic

influence, and the Higher Ego is set free. It follows the natural bent of its own affinities, and in so being set free passes at once into the spiritual aspect of its consciousness (occultists will understand that I am here using the term "spiritual" as embracing the astral plane), but in so far as this partial freedom does not involve the complete severance between the physical brain and the finer astral organism, the latter continues in direct relation with the physical body by magnetic threads or ligatures — one is obliged to use materialistic phrases in endeavoring to put such thoughts into words — and thus is accessible to stimuli which act in the first instance only on the physical organism, or let us rather say on the astral aura of the physical organism. Free as it is, the higher self is thus in continued intellectual relations with the mesmerist whose magnetic influence has sufficed to entrance the body, and to set its own activities at large. And the plane of such activities which it has now reached is entirely exempt from the restrictions that embarrass activity on the physical plane. Thought, will, or desire become the agents of something which we may think of as movement about the world, and

the Higher Ego can be translated to any distant place, or almost to any distant point in space, with as much facility as a thought may be turned towards some distant region with which the thinker is familiar.

Just, however, as it is only to a place with which he is familiar that any one can turn his thoughts with precision, so as to recall images of what he has seen, so it is only to some place with which the Higher Ego is in some kind of magnetic relation that its attention and perceptive powers can be turned. Thus we find that while a clairvoyant, however gifted, would be almost hopelessly embarrassed if asked to discover in some distant part of the world a person unknown to his waking self, and equally unknown to the mesmerist, it would be perfectly easy for such a higher self to discover the person to whom some specific article, handed to his body and thus brought into magnetic relations with his own aura, originally belonged. The clue to the accurate scientific comprehension of all the phenomena of mesmeric clairvoyance, having to do with what is called *rapport*, is thus readily afforded. If you have a lock of hair cut from some person's head, and put it into

the hands of the sleeping clairvoyant, the magnetic vibrations connecting that with its original owner serve as a thread to guide the emancipated ego to the goal. And the truth is that what has now been said, simple as it is, constitutes the whole explanation of those phenomena belonging to the order of "clairvoyance in space." You will never get such clairvoyance out of a person whose spiritual evolution is inferior to the neutral point, and whose higher self has not been evolved to any degree of self-consciousness. Such a person may, as already explained, be highly susceptible of mesmeric influence, may respond with the most completely automatic docility to all the so-called suggestions of hypnotism, may be obedient to quite a terrible extent to the commands imposed upon him by a mesmerist, but will never be able to accomplish achievements beyond the range of his own nature.

I am not going to attempt an explanation which shall as completely cover the phenomenon of "clairvoyance in time." The mysteries of prevision are extremely bewildering, and on them we can only throw such speculative light as may be afforded, for example, by theories of metaphysics like those sug-

gested by Dr. Oliver Lodge in his remarkable address at the Cardiff Meeting of the British Association. He says: —

"A luminous and helpful idea is that *time* is but a relative mode of regarding things; we progress through phenomena at a certain definite pace, and this subjective advance we interpret in an objective manner, as if events necessarily happened in this order and at this precise rate. But that may be only one mode of regarding them. The events may be in some sense in existence always, both past and future, and it may be we who are arriving at them, not they which are happening. The analogy of a traveler in a railway train is useful; if he could never leave the train nor alter its pace he would probably consider the landscapes as necessarily successive and be unable to conceive their co-existence. . . . We perceive, therefore, a possible fourth dimensional aspect about time, the inexorableness of whose flow may be a natural part of our present limitations. And if we once grasp the idea that past and future may be actually existing, we can recognize that they may have a controlling influence on all present action, and the two together may constitute the

'higher plane' or totality of things, after which, as it seems to me, we are impelled to seek, in connection with the directing of form or determinism, and the action of living beings consciously directed to a definite and preconceived end."

It is true that a good deal of clairvoyance in time relating to events in the immediate future and having to do with the course, for example, of an illness, are explicable without diving into any very great profundities of metaphysical thought. A much clearer perception of causes in operation in any such transaction than is accessible to the incarnate consciousness may enable the higher self to discern inevitable consequences, and thus to predict them. But such foresight as that concerned with the progress of an illness hardly deserves to rank with the Cazotte prophecy, for example, in connection with the French Revolution, where the precise destinies of five or six people, who years afterwards came to a violent end in the convulsions of that period, were foretold with exactitude. I do not wish to leave the reader under the impression that occult science, even as expounded by its modern literature, is without hypotheses which go far

to suggest explanations even of the most exalted examples of clairvoyance in time; but to make these theories intelligible would involve a complete examination of the higher mysteries associated with Karma and the agencies which control it, and would lie beyond the province of the present treatise.

Let us turn now to that variety of clairvoyance which has to do with the observation of natural phenomena lying wholly outside the physical plane. On this branch of our subject the older literature of mesmerism is by no means so rich as in reference to the inferior departments. But the very interesting autobiography of Andrew Jackson Davis, sometimes known as the Poughkeepsie Seer, includes the narrative of his own mesmeric treatment directed entirely to the end that his higher self should be liberated for the observation of nature on the spiritual planes, and carried on, I have little doubt, under the direction of agencies belonging already to more highly evolved examples of the human race than those around us in ordinary life. Davis was a born psychic, to whom visions and astral experiences of all sorts were continually occurring, although the external circumstances of his life would

seem at the first glance to have been terribly unfavorable to the development of any higher faculties. He was born, that is to say, of parents in the very humblest rank of life; the father seems to have been a cobbler in too small a way of business to be even called a shoemaker, who worked hard for a miserable living in an outlying village of the State of New York. Davis himself grew up almost entirely without education, scarcely able to read and write, and even when grown up, some of his spiritual teachings, or those which came through his lips, and which fill many volumes, were written down for him by friends. At about the age of seventeen Davis was first mesmerized by a man named Livingstone, and at once began to manifest all the usual symptoms of clairvoyance, which rapidly culminated in spiritual flights through higher realms of nature, in connection with which by degrees were developed close relationship between the seer and beings of some exalted order whom he encountered in the spirit, and from whom he received teaching on spiritual subjects, the accumulation and record of which became the whole occupation of his life. It is not my business here to criticise these, although

gladly bearing testimony in passing to the fact that their tone and character is exalted and ennobling, although they are less associated with precise interpretations of hidden mysteries in nature than some of those which, during the progress of recent theosophical developments, have enriched the later literature of occult research. However, in regard to the particular matter in hand, Davis's incidental explanation, which he fortifies with diagrams, of the process through which the spiritual clairvoyant passes during his magnetic treatment under the hands of a qualified mesmerizer, seems to me the best exposition of that particular subject I have ever seen in print. When first sitting down he represents the mesmerist and sensitive as separately encircled by auras which do not blend with one another. By degrees these mutually expand, and their limits intersect. As the magnetic process goes on, and as the body of the sensitive becomes entranced under the influence of mesmeric emanations from the operator's hands, the two auras become entirely blended, a condition of things illustrated in Davis's diagrams by a representation of the two persons seated opposite one another surrounded

by one oval, representing their combined auras. Then as the magnetizer ceases to throw out any influence the auras slightly differentiate again without coming apart, a magnetic emanation is thrown upward from the sensitive's head, visible, of course, to those who have faculties for seeing such things, and thus the sensitive keeps in relation with his own higher self, which by that time has taken flight, while the blending of the two auras enables the mesmerist also to remain in intelligible communication with the absent consciousness.

To analyze all the possibilities which may be associated with such a spiritual flight on the part of the true ego of a human being already sufficiently spiritualized in nature to be capable of deriving definite, exact impressions from spiritual planes, would be to write a treatise on spiritual science and the higher evolution of man rather than on the mesmeric methods by means of which touch may be obtained with these great realities. But from the point I have now reached I am enabled to handle the argument which to my mind renders it so important at the present age of the world that the loftier possibilities of mesmerism should be properly under-

stood, and the subject guarded from the indiscriminating disapproval of those who are animated in speaking of it by exclusive reference to its more ignoble and degrading manifestations. Of course, let me acknowledge at the outset, that anything like playing with forces of nature so far-reaching, so magnificent in some of their potentialities, and at the same time fraught with so much danger in association with some of their worst, is to be condemned in the most unequivocal terms. I do not necessarily mean that trifling experiments, even when they are associated with some atmosphere of amusement, may not be harmless enough when colored with an intelligent curiosity concerning an unknown subject, but attempts at the practice of mesmerism may very soon outrun the character of these elementary diversions, and then if people go on with the matter at all, they ought to go on with it in at least as serious a frame of mind as they would handle any other branch of natural study. Its continued use for petty and degrading purposes, in which grotesque effects are sought for even in preference to those which would illuminate the inquiry, is of course to be condemned without re-

serve. Indeed, if people only knew the real significance of some lofty spiritual phrases they are in the habit of employing in connection with conventional religion, they would feel that very formidable terms of censure are due to any act involving the degradation of natural forces having to do with the spiritual life. In their way, and to the limited extent that the thing is possible for the modern ignoramus, such acts constitute what early theologians meant by the "sin against the Holy Ghost." But while at the bottom of the scale it may be little less than a deadly sin to employ mesmeric power with evil ends in view, and while it is very wrong to employ it with ignoble and sordid ends in view, it becomes something more than permissible to employ it in the cure of diseases, merely physical though such objects may be, and ultimately the practice of mesmerism rises into the region of the loftiest and most ennobling pursuit when the great force is employed to set free and stimulate to the utmost the highest evolution of the highest consciousness in man.

First of all we have to study the process, and that can only be done in association with its practice, in order that the scientific think-

ing of the present day may be rescued from the slough of incredulity as regards all psychic phenomena in which it is at present, I will not say hopelessly entangled, but at all events in which its further progress meets with very great impediment. Then as regards the further advance of practical occult study in this generation, mesmerism, as conducted by people who comprehend the organization of that higher realm of existence into which they would introduce the spiritual consciousness of their sensitives, is certainly the most accessible avenue of higher knowledge concerning the possibilities of a spiritual evolution and the ulterior destinies of man which the opportunities of ordinary life leave at our disposal. And nothing is more entirely free than the higher mesmerism — however frequently repeated with any given sensitive — from the mischievous consequences having to do with the enslavement of the will, and the deterioration of individual growth, which results are undoubtedly associated with the ignoble kind of mesmerism commonly known as hypnotism in the present day. Of course to fulfill the conditions that I am talking about, it is necessary that a mesmerist should, to

begin with, be governed first and foremost by a desire for the spiritual welfare of the sensitive with whom he is dealing. However fascinating he may find, or rather I should say he might find, the attributes of that sensitive under mesmerism, he must forbear from experiments which interfere with the loftier spiritual growth of the higher self, and refrain, for example, from sending it about to different places on the physical earth in pursuit of knowledge or information, however innocent in its nature. The higher self trained under mesmerism to explore the physical plane will have great difficulty in getting clear of it, if that should be desired at a later stage. Further than this, the higher self which could be trained under mesmerism to explore the mysterious complications of the astral plane will be equally impeded, perhaps even more impeded, in that way as regards the finer spiritual culture on which it might be capable of entering if properly directed. The higher mesmerism, in fact, to be altogether admirable and meritorious, must set out from the beginning with being absolutely the highest. There is no way of getting the higher self of a sensitive under mesmerism

into true relations, supposing these to be possible in view of the whole karmic situation, with the loftiest spiritual teachers accessible to such a higher self, unless it is from the beginning kept clear of all the entangling defilements of lower experience in that state of consciousness external to the body; but I say with a fixed conviction that in this matter I am speaking nothing but the exact scientific truth, that there are great numbers of people about the world born with psychic faculties indicating, by the very fact that they exist, considerable development in other lives along the lines of spiritual evolution, who may be put in relations with occult initiation of the loftiest sort under the influence of mesmerism conducted with that end in view by an operator who knows what he is about; and in such cases the glorious result contemplated may be hastened to an extent which by comparison with slower processes of treatment is quite overwhelming to the imagination.

Of course, whereas these greatest results can only be secured where both sensitive and mesmerizer are so circumstanced as to have potentialities of relationship with the world of occult initiation, there are good possibili-

ties on a lower level within the range of people who cannot be called occultists, and even if these are associated with some theoretical perils, it would be hardly more reasonable on that account to forbid their pursuit altogether, than to shut up Switzerland because in their practical adoration of its beauties some tourists will from time to time, in the future as in the past, be lost down crevasses. There is an extreme of goody-goodyism in connection with the study of nature's occult mysteries which operates to retard progress in that department of human energy as effectually as extreme timidity would check it on the physical plane. A reasonable comprehension of the whole theory of mesmerism in its lower and higher aspects such as — to make it no more complete — is set forth in this volume, ought to enable any well-disposed person to explore the delightful wonders of this great science without fear either of incurring unknown pains and penalties, or of landing in still less comprehensible disasters the soul organisms of those with whom he may experiment.

CHAPTER IX.

MESMERIC PRACTICE.

THE purpose I had in view in writing this treatise has been much more that of opening out an interpretation of mesmeric phenomena than of guiding any new investigators in the practice of the art, whether with the view of accomplishing mesmeric cures or with that of exploring the higher mysteries of human nature. However, just because there has never hitherto been any clearly defined *rationale* of mesmerism to guide the practice of operators, we find the practical manuals for the most part discordant in their directions, and very often embodying conceptions as to what ought to be done or left undone, that would be completely reversed by a correct appreciation of mesmeric theory. It may be as well, therefore, before bringing these remarks to a close, that I should indicate with some precision the methods by which mesmeric energy ought to be directed, and the leading errors

which have vitiated so many of the popular manuals on this subject.

In the very beginning Mesmer himself seems to have adopted a great variety of methods, some of them almost extravagantly energetic, and some which were not in any true sense of the term mesmeric at all. His much talked of *baquets* belong to the latter order of processes, and were adopted when his patients became so importunate and numerous that it was quite impossible for him to work with each individually in the manner he seems to have impressed upon his disciples as the most efficacious. The *baquet* merely consisted of a trough or box with magnetized water with rods or wires leading from it which the patients held. Those who were influenced by such an apparatus must certainly have been in a highly susceptible state, and in many cases may have been hardly magnetized at all. If they came under any influence, it would rather be that of a nervous paralysis, such as the hypnotizers induce, although when the *baquet* was employed with Mesmer himself walking about the whole time amongst his patients, it is likely enough that a good deal of his own superabundant energy became infused

into them. Then again he started a system of mesmerizing trees, around which cords were tied, which persons desirous of experiencing the influence were taught to hold. Here, again, we can hardly call such a process mesmerism in any true sense, although just as at Lourdes and Trèves results of an astonishing character connected with pathological conditions will constantly be developed amongst people associated with a widely prevalent excitement.

The direct personal method of mesmerism employed, at all events, by Mesmer's immediate successors was, on the other hand, unnecessarily and inconveniently energetic. It has been copied ever since by a great number of operators, and their example has, not unnaturally, been made use of by people inclined to discredit mesmerism all round by showing how objectionable, and in some cases almost indecorous, its processes are. The plan used to be for the operator to sit exactly in front of the subject, each on separate chairs, holding the knees of the subject between his own, arranging that the feet also should be in contact, and in this position making downward passes, after in the first instance holding his hands on the shoulders

of the sensitive, and leaning forward so that the magnetic influence of his breath might be felt. Such an arrangement as this is eminently unsuited, at all events, to cases in which the operator is a man and the subject a woman, and large use has been made of its obvious inconvenience, in such cases, by writers opposed to the whole undertaking. Where the patient and the operator are both of the same sex the objection, perhaps, cannot apply in the same way, and I do not deny that the attitude and manipulation in question would be of powerful efficacy; but nothing could be worse for an operator than to use one method which he considered the best, and then, in all cases where his patients might be women, to use another which he in his own secret consciousness believed less effective. It is far better to adopt one system and stick to it in all cases, taking care to design its details so that it may never be unsuitable.

And as for the precise method which this should be, I would not like to prescribe any one as inevitably the right one, because different mesmerists have with equal success adopted very different systems, and each person in turn must adapt his own customs

to his own inclinations and inner feeling as to what is the best course to take, so that no one could dogmatically prescribe any course as the only right one. But a very convenient arrangement, when the object in view is to induce a mesmeric trance, is to put the sensitive into a large and comfortable arm-chair with good solid flat arms, like those familiar to all clubs and places where people study comfort, and then for the operator to sit sideways on the arm of the chair. In this way he practically fronts his patient without any embarrassing entanglement in regard to the knees, and the passes can be made with perfect facility. He is also a little above the patient, which is an advantage, and nearer to him without any leaning forward than would be the case if he sat on an opposite chair. Having taken up this position he should first endeavor to bring his own magnetic system into some *rapport* with that of his patient by holding the hands for a time, or if he likes, which is perhaps the best way, holding the thumbs only, so that his own thumbs press against those of the patient, ball to ball. The thumb seems to be a centre of nervous action in the hand, which renders this arrangement efficacious.

Then, after holding the hands or thumbs in this way for a few minutes, during which there is no necessity to be in any strained condition of mind, but during which it may be rather better than not that the operator and patient should be quietly conversing in reference to the business they have in hand, the operator should transfer one hand — presumably the left if he is sitting, as I imagine him to be doing, on the right-hand arm of the chair — to the patient's forehead, continuing to hold both the patient's hands in his own right. From this time it is desirable that the conversation should cease, and that the thought of the mesmerist should be concentrated on the task he has in hand.

Remember, it is this *thought* which is the all-important matter; little or no effect would be produced by manipulations, however exactly and faithfully carried out, if the thought should in the mean time be wandering off to other matters, or entangling itself in the conversation of bystanders. And from the first the thought must be directed with a steady and continuous purpose to some definite idea immediately within the compass of the situation's possibility. If he is endeavoring to induce a trance, the

mesmerist must keep that idea in view, not bothering himself for the moment as to what may follow after, but simply imagining in his own mind that from his hand a rain of subtle soporific influence is descending and drenching the nervous organism of the sensitive. Perhaps it may enable any one who tries, to realize this idea in his imagination all the better, if the study of these pages may have induced him to comprehend and believe, what is the actual fact, that such an influence does descend under the conditions supposed. Then, after a minute or two of such concentration, the other hand should be raised and the left moved slightly to one side to give it room; both hands should then be held on the forehead, the fingers resting on the top of the head, and the same thought be continued. After another minute or two the hands should be slowly parted downwards, stroking the side of the head until at the shoulders they leave contact with the sensitive, and are then carried down about as far as the waist, or as far as the position of the operator enables him to carry them without inconvenience. Then such passes are renewed, not again with any contact as regards the head, but

from a position in which the fingers point downwards above the top of the head, and then are drawn within an inch or two of the face, and so down the body. Sometimes people prefer to sweep them round the arms, bringing them together at the sensitive's lap, where the two hands may rest folded; but this appears to me a matter of taste. One thing which is not a matter of taste, but a matter of great importance often overlooked, is that the mesmerist should not, in lifting his hands upwards to renew the next pass after the last has been concluded, undo its effect involuntarily. He would undo its effect in a great measure if he simply sweep his hand back along the path it has traced. In coming down, what should be done is to close the hands completely at the conclusion of each pass. Bring them back by an upward, circular, outside course, and only open them again when they are in a position to begin the next pass. If the mesmerist is at all sensitive, and if he darkens the room in which he is carrying on his work to a degree which just enables him to see the features of his subject, but would not enable him to read print, he will very likely see the mesmeric fluid passing, or if he does not

actually see it passing he will see it steaming up all round the subject's head; and this, by the by, he will see all the more if the person I have called the subject happens not to be a sensitive but simply a non-receptive subject. The true sensitive so readily absorbs the magnetic fluid that but little of it will be seen steaming up during the magnetizing process. A quite non-receptive person, on the other hand, will take in nothing, and from the first the cloud of wasted influence will be perceptible.

There is only one more point in connection with this general prescription on which I care to lay any emphasis. It is quite true, as Mesmer conceived in the beginning, that the breath is a powerful vehicle of magnetic influence, but in order to bring this fact into play it is wholly unnecessary to lean down and puff in your sensitive's face. Everything really turns upon the regulation of your breath during the magnetizing process; it is not necessary to puff at all in any audible or obtrusive manner, but the operator's breathing should be synchronized with the passes; he should inhale his breath during the upward movements of his hands, and during the downward movement should

exhale. This rule gives the true clue to the time which should be occupied with the passes. Many of the mesmeric manuals are quite at sea on this point, some appearing to think that the greatest efficacy is secured if the pass is made to last as long as possible, so that they would have it extend to a minute or more. It should occupy just as much time as the operator requires for slowly exhaling one lungsful of breath, without so unduly retarding that process as to induce any strained feeling in the lungs or oblige him to take rapid breaths to repair lost time.

The time which will be taken in putting a subject off to sleep varies of course from a few minutes to infinity. With some people no ordinary mesmerist will ever succeed; with those who are highly sensitive and with whom he has already operated successfully on former occasions a very few minutes will be enough, and the earlier processes I have described could be proportionately hastened. But with any one who is being tried for the first time it can hardly ever be worth while to continue the process for more than half an hour, because it is scarcely possible for an operator to protract anything like vigor and concentration for a greater length of

time; but this, of course, must depend upon the energy of the operator and the ardor of his desire to succeed in any particular case. Some people would be hopelessly exhausted before the half hour was over, and others would be able to continue for much longer.

The method I have described seems to me the best and most convenient with the view of inducing a psychic trance with what may be called spiritual objects in view; but I have known mesmerists who resort entirely to the magnetic emanations of the eye, and take no trouble to make passes at all, simply staring at their sensitive with intense fixedness of gaze. This process, to my mind, bears too close resemblance to the hypnotic method to be altogether wholesome, and moreover requires that the sensitive should keep his eyes open until paralyzed or fascinated; and this is a less easy and natural method for him than the one that I have described, in which it is left to his own option when he shall close his eyes, and in which he passes off to sleep without any jarring of the nervous system. I shall leave my readers to seek for themselves, in books devoted to the modern corruptions of this subject, for an account of the methods employed to

produce the so-called hypnotic sleep. These involve no conscious gift of magnetism by any operator, and simply provoke a diseased condition of the nervous system, which renders the patient subject, it is true, to suggestions that may afterwards be made by the operator who is directing the undertaking, but which also renders that patient equally liable to come under the suggestive influence of other persons, good, bad, or indifferent, and especially under suggestive influences with which the mere physicist has no familiarity, but which nevertheless are facts in nature, and as grave in their importance as himself. But putting out of sight all the mischievous devices of hypnotism, the mesmeric method which I have been describing does not by any means cover all the ground, for if curative results are in view it may be that a very different manipulation is required, and a very different direction may have to be given to his thought by the operator.

To produce a magnetic cure in a thoroughly healthy and natural manner, the first thing to be done (as I have already said in speaking of the theory of curative mesmerism) is to draw out the evil nerve aura, or magnetism, of the sufferer. This has, by

the hypothesis, been concentrated in some portion of his organism, and it is to that portion, whatever it may be, that the mesmerist's attention must be directed. No passes are called for here — not in the beginning, at all events — and mesmerism resolves itself into a "laying-on of hands," to adopt a biblical expression, but receives its scientific character when the mesmerist is alive to the fact that in laying on his hands he is using them as a sponge to sop up or attract, and not as a jet of force through which to exhale anything. His proceedings must now be much more deliberate than before. The hands should be kept on the seat of the ailment, whatever it is, for a minute or two, then drawn off with a downward movement and vigorously shaken as with the idea that the bad magnetism is being thrown off with the utmost possible energy, and, as I have before described, impelled into those elemental agencies in nature with which it may be in affinity, and whose duty it may be, as the matter presents itself to the operator's mind, to carry it off. Then the laying-on is renewed, and the whole business must go on for as long a time within limits as the operator's strength will enable him to

protract it — a time which I am not supposing to exceed more than half an hour. Then something else has to be done. If we have been successful in withdrawing bad magnetism from the patient's system, that has got to be replaced with other magnetism of a healthier character. To get rid of the last traces of that with which he may have been contaminating his hands, the mesmerist should wash them, and then begin again, either with a "laying-on" associated with the idea of pouring in influence into the system instead of withdrawing it, or by means of downward passes of much the same kind as those which he would employ with a view of inducing a trance, but not with the same thought; for remember it is the thought, in all cases, in the mesmerist's mind which colors the aura which he throws off, so to speak — which gives its specific character to the influence he is bringing to bear on his subject. Just as in the case of trance mesmerism he should be thinking all the time of the force he is throwing off as one of a somnolent character, which will deaden his patient's nerves and obliterate his active consciousness, so in the case of the curative influence he must think of it as a stimulating, exhil-

arating influence, which will course along the patient's nerves and refresh him, as champagne might refresh him in another way, though much less beneficially.

One more consideration in reference to this curative manipulation. The effect of hands laid on in the manner I have described on the bare flesh, if that can be got at, is simply tenfold more powerful than that which would be conveyed through clothing. Of course this hint must be made use of or neglected according to circumstances. If clothing must be retained, all one can say is that in regard to intercepting mesmeric influence, the worst imaginable sort of clothing is that made of silk.

Certainly, as Esdaile's experience has so largely shown us, immense curative effects are wrought by nature during the magnetic sleep, if that can be superinduced. But it cannot always be superinduced, even in cases where people might be highly subject to the good influence of magnetic treatment without losing consciousness; and, secondly, even if it can be induced, its effect will be enormously stimulated if, besides putting the patient to sleep, the manipulation here recommended be adopted.

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